

**The Economy of Asses in *Don Quijote de la Mancha*:
Metalepsis, Miscegenation, and Commerce in Cervantes's Picaresque**

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“Los ángulos de los triángulos isósceles que están sobre la basis son entre sí iguales. Y extendidas las líneas rectas iguales, serán también iguales entre sí los ángulos que están debajo de la basis.”
—Euclid, “Pons asinorum” (Zamorano trans.)

“Asno eres, y asno has de ser, y en asno has de parar cuando se te acabe el curso de la vida, que para mí tengo que antes llegará ella a su último término que tú caigas y des en la cuenta de que eres bestia.”
—Cervantes, *Don Quijote* (2.28.866)

In his seminal work, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, in an essay entitled “The Enchanted Dulcinea,” Erich Auerbach—a founder of the field of comparative literature—assesses chapter ten of Miguel de Cervantes’s 1615 continuation of his *opus magnum*. The chapter involves the knight’s and the squire’s unequal estimations of their encounter with three peasant women outside the town of El Toboso, and from Auerbach’s perspective, it is pivotal to the overall design of *Don Quijote*: “Among the many episodes which represent a clash between Don Quijote’s illusion and an ordinary reality which contradicts it, this one holds a special place” (339). He offers two reasons why *DQ* 2.10 uniquely inaugurates the mad knight’s long return to sanity: 1) “This is the climax of his illusion and disillusionment: and although this time too he manages to find a solution, a way to save his illusion, the solution (Dulcinea is enchanted) is so intolerable that henceforth all his thoughts are concentrated upon one goal: to save her and break the enchantment”; 2) “Until now it had been Don Quijote who, encountering everyday phenomena, spontaneously saw and transformed them in terms of the romances of chivalry, while Sancho was generally in doubt and often tried to contradict and prevent his master’s absurdities. Now it is the other way round” (339). Auerbach then duly analyzes the episode’s contrasts between the high rhetoric of chivalric romance and the low realism of normal life. Nevertheless, in the end he says we shouldn’t read much into this tension. Cervantes merely composed a light-hearted farce: “Don Quijote’s adventures never reveal any of the basic problems of the society of the time” (345). Auerbach takes particular aim at the “transcendent interpretations” of *DQ* by the Romantics, arguing that they overstate Cervantes’s sophistication. He counters: “the historian—whose task it is to define the place of a given work in a historical continuity—must endeavor, insofar as that is still possible, to attain a clear understanding of what the work meant to its author and his contemporaries” (353). Yet Auerbach addresses neither the problems of Spanish history nor the conventions of the early modern novel. We simply have to take his word for it that Cervantes’s text is “noncritical and nonproblematic” (358).¹

In this essay, I’ll confirm Auerbach’s intuitions about the importance of the encounter with Dulcinea in *DQ* 2.10, but I’ll do so by positing a deeper interpretation of the episode that emphasizes three facets of its meaning: a) its links to other parts of *DQ*, b) its allusion to the key

¹ Leo Spitzer, another founder of comparative literature, reaches the same conclusion, as does Hispanist Peter E. Russell. For another value-free reading of *DQ*, although at the nihilistic polar opposite of Auerbach’s, Spitzer’s, and Russell’s views of it as light-hearted satire, see Bloom (2003b).

symbol of the picaresque genre, and c) its critique of racial intolerance in late-Renaissance Spain. Finally, I'll show how Cervantes completes his intratextual case for picaresque miscegenation by advocating commercial exchange as the ultimate social palliative. *DQ* does indeed represent a shift in Western Literature toward Auerbach's earthly, everyday reality. Yet it is also a baroque work of art which challenges readers to discern a learned and rebellious commentary on the problems of early seventeenth-century Spain.

Complementing its encounter with Dulcinea, its role reversals, and its contrasts between chivalric fantasy and modern reality, another aspect of *DQ* 2.10 indicates more than Auerbach's idea of the novel as "refined intellectual diversion" (356). The episode advances what I call the "muddling of the mounts," the "instability of the steeds," or the "assent of the asses," deploying sixteen different terms while making no less than thirty-nine references to animals upon which the peasant women, Sancho Panza, Don Quijote, and others are supposed to travel. These appear in the following order: *rucio*, *caballo*, *jumento*, *jumento*, *mulas*, *dromedarios*, *rucio*, *pollinos*, *pollinas*, *borricas*, *caballería*, *Rocinante*, *caballo*, *cananeas*, *hacaneas*, *cananeas*, *hacaneas*, *crías*, *yeguas*, *crías*, *borricos*, *hacaneas*, *borricos*, *borricos*, *borricas*, *rucio*, *jumento*, *burra*, *cananea*, *borrica*, *pollina*, *jumenta*, *pollina*, *hacanea*, *cebra*, *caballo*, *hacanea*, *borrica*, and *bestias*. This concatenating accumulation of beasts of conveyance is entertaining, but it also cries out for analysis. The hyperbole of Arabian camels and an African zebra are Cervantes's way of signaling more than an assertion of realism in the depiction of rural Spain.

How else do we know to interpret the animals of *DQ* 2.10? I offer four additional reasons. First, because Cervantes urges us to ignore them. Readers who prefer Auerbach's light take on *DQ* can argue that the narrator claims the beasts aren't important. But Cervantes's narrators are purposefully unreliable. Moreover, Sónson Carrasco's interrogation of Sancho early in the 1615 text regarding "la pérdida del jumento" halfway through the 1605 text has made them a concern (2.3.655). Tasked with finding Dulcinea in *DQ* 2.10, Sancho resolves to deceive his master, and just as he is about to mount his *rucio* and enter El Toboso, he looks up and sees just what he needs: "cuando se levantó para subir en el rucio vio que venían tres labradoras sobre tres pollinos, o pollinas, que el autor no lo declara, aunque más puede creer que eran borricas, por ser ordinaria caballería de las aldeanas; pero como no va mucho en esto, no hay para que detenernos en averiguarlo" (2.10.704). Sancho's vision, coinciding with his decision to mount his own very problematic ass, undercuts the narrator's already strained disinterest in the nature of the peasant women's steeds. And Sancho reprises this same misdirection when he urges his master to come meet the mistress of his heart. He reports that Dulcinea and her ladies-in-waiting "vienen a caballo sobre tres cananeas remendadas," and when the knight corrects his use of "Canaanites" – "*Hacaneas* querrás decir, Sancho"–, the squire echoes the narrator's elaborate apathy: "Poca diferencia hay –respondió Sancho– de *cananeas* a *hacaneas*; pero, vengan sobre lo que vinieren, ellas vienen las más galanas señoras que se puedan desear" (2.10.705). Later, in a classic case of Cervantes's use of indirect free speech, the narrator even accepts Sancho's erroneous *cananeas* when describing Dulcinea's escape: "Apenas se vio libre la aldeana que había hecho la figura de Dulcinea, cuando, picando a su *cananea* con un aguijón que en un palo traía, dio a correr por el prado adelante" (2.10.708). Again and again, Cervantes brings us back around to deliberate on the thorny significance of the episode's mounts. It's almost painful.

Second, regardless of the race of the animal that Dulcinea rides in *DQ* 2.10, it's a problem in its own right. There it goes kicking around back and forth before our eyes like a symbol annoyed at being neglected: "y como la borrica sentía la punta del aguijón, que le fatigaba más de lo ordinario, comenzó a dar corcovos, de manera que dio con la señora Duclinea en tierra" (2.10.708).

Simultaneous to its retaliatory movement, Dulcinea's ass-turned-bucking-bronco mutates from *cananea* into *borrica*, *pollina*, and *jumenta*, back into *pollina* again, and then *hacanea*, *cebra*, and finally *caballo*. Furthermore, the narrator allows this burst of beastly metamorphoses to affect the knight's object of desire. If she starts off as "la aldeana que había hecho la figura de Dulcinea," after she falls and leaps back onto her ass, "quedó a horcajadas, como si fuera hombre" (2.10.708). Sancho extends this figurative chaos with an exclamation that destabilizes Dulcinea's ethnicity, nationality, sex, and even her species: "¡Vive Roque que es la señora nuestra ama más ligera que un alcotán y que puede enseñar a subir a la jineta al más diestro cordobés o mexicano!" (2.10.708). Animals and people are not what they seem: change and movement signal meaning. Dulcinea on her ass is a literary "figure," overtly so, as potent as a harrier or the most skilled Mexican horseman.

Third, the fluidity of *DQ* 2.10's rodeo interests us because enigmatic mounts will play symbolic roles in future episodes. There are many. I'll emphasize eight. 1) After encountering the enchanted Dulcinea, knight and squire meet the allegorical theater troop of Angulo el Malo in *DQ* 2.11. A striking aspect of this episode is how the rebellious *Diablo* steals Sancho's *rucio*, only to fall off again, allowing the squire to recover it. 2) *DQ* 2.25 relates the hilarious "Braying Tale," in which two alderman set off in search of a lost ass by imitating its cries. They praise each other for the accuracy of their mimics, but all they find in the end is the horrific carcass of an ass, killed and eaten by wolves. One alderman's final comment is priceless: "Ya me maravillaba yo de que él no respondía, pues a no estar muerto, él rebuznara si nos oyera, o no fuera asno; pero a trueco de haberos oído rebuznar con tanta gracia, compadre, doy por bien empleado el trabajo que he tenido en buscarle, aunque le he hallado muerto" (2.25.838). In *DQ* 2.27, Cervantes pushes the story further when Don Quijote and Sancho stumble into a looming civil war between towns whose citizens claim superiority at braying. 3) At the end of an intense debate over Sancho's salary in *DQ* 2.28, the knight calls his squire an ass—"Asno eres"—and Sancho acknowledges as much: "para ser del todo asno no me falta más de la cola" (2.28.866-67). 4) In the Clavileño episode of *DQ* 2.41, knight and squire mount another tricky steed. They are fooled into thinking they soar above the earth before being thrown to the ground when the wooden horse explodes from firecrackers placed within it by the Duke and Duchess's minions. During the episodes at the ducal palace as well as Sancho's reign over Barataria, the squire voices constant concern for his ass's well-being (2.31.881-82, 2.33.911, 2.44.982, 2.49.1025, 2.53.1064-65, 2.55.1082). 5) In *DQ* 2.55, after quitting Barataria and refusing to help his exiled Morisco friend Ricote recover his fortune, Sancho and his ass tumble into a cave, from which they are rescued by Don Quijote and more of the Duke and Duchess's entourage. When Sancho cries out to Don Quijote for assistance, the narrator hastens to add that his *rucio* might have human consciousness: "Y hay más, que no parece sino que el jumento entendió lo que Sancho dijo, porque al momento comenzó a rebuznar tan recio, que toda la cueva retumbaba" (2.55.1081). 6) In *DQ* 2.58, our *hidalgo* glosses a series of effigies of mounted saints: George, James, Martin, and Paul. Saint Paul is the superior exemplar because, after his horse threw him, he renounced his life as a warrior knight persecuting Christ and instead became "el mayor defensor suyo" (2.58.1096). 7) At the end of *DQ* 2.62, as knight and squire enter Barcelona, impudent youths fasten hackles to the tails of Rocinante and the *rucio*, causing both men to be thrown to the ground. 8) Finally, upon returning home in *DQ* 2.73, Sancho dresses his ass up like a penitent victim of the Spanish Inquisition (2.73.1211).

The fourth reason the enchanted Dulcinea's unruly mounts are significant is because Cervantes relates *DQ* 2.10's events back to what remains to this day the key compositional mystery of *DQ* 1: the disappearance and reappearance of Sancho's ass (1.25.280, 1.46.531). Coopting Carrasco's questions in *DQ* 2.3, as Sancho heads toward El Toboso in *DQ* 2.10, he carries on a

complex dialogue with himself: “–Sepamos agora, Sancho hermano, adónde va vuesa merced. ¿Va a buscar algún jumento que se le haya perdido? –No, por cierto. –Pues, ¿qué va a buscar? –Voy a buscar, como quien no dice nada, a una princesa, y en ella al sol de la hermosura y a todo el cielo junto. –¿Y adónde pensáis hallar eso que decís, Sancho? –¿Adónde? En la gran ciudad del Toboso” (2.10.702). Editor Francisco Rico notes: “Podría ser una alusión a la pérdida del rucio... con una posible autoironía por parte del autor” (2.10.702n16). Rico is too timid. Approaching El Toboso, Sancho is *not* looking for his infamous lost *rucio*. An animated denial of meaning again amounts to meaning: we are indeed in search of Sancho’s ass in *DQ* 1.

In addition to Sancho’s intermittent *rucio*, pack animals play key roles in many episodes in *DQ* 1. I offer nine. 1) After battling *arrieros* (“muleteers”) at the first inn in *DQ* 1.3 and getting thrashed by the “mozo de mulas” of a train of Toledan merchants in *DQ* 1.4, the humbled *hidalgo* returns home draped over his neighbor Pedro Alonso’s ass in *DQ* 1.5. 2) Two chapters later, Sancho’s first appearance provokes Don Quijote’s hilarious doubt as whether or not his squire should bring his ass on their adventures: “En lo del asno reparó un poco don Quijote, imaginando si se le acordaba si algún caballero andante había traído escudero caballero asnalmente” (1.7.92). 3) The retreat via Alonso’s ass in *DQ* 1.5 is reprised in *DQ* 1.15-16 when our *hidalgo* and Rocinante are beaten by *yangüeses* and Sancho must carry his master to the second inn atop his *rucio*. There, another *arriero* plays a key role as Maritornes’s lover and chief instigator of the collective thrashing of Don Quijote and Sancho. 4) In the “Mambrino’s Helmet” episode of *DQ* 1.21, our hero attacks an innocent barber and steals his basin. After this savage victory, Sancho contemplates swapping his ass for the barber’s, a healthier steed with better trappings. 5) Next, in *DQ* 1.23, as knight and squire flee the Santa Hermandad by entering the Sierra Morena, we are treated to one of the novel’s most grisly images: “hallaron en un arroyo caída, muerta y medio comida de perros y picada de grajos, una mula ensillada y enfrenada” (1.23.256). The decayed mule heralds the encounter with Cardenio, a love-crazed *caballero salvaje* with whom Don Quijote identifies. It also marks Sancho’s theft of 100 *escudos* belonging to Cardenio (1.23.251-57), which, by the way, is the second philological problem indicated by Carrasco at the onset of part two (2.3.655: “se le olvidó poner lo que Sancho hizo de aquellos cien escudos que halló en la maleta en Sierra Morena”). At the end of the 1605 novel, Sancho ducks his wife’s inquiry into these same *escudos* with a blunt refrain: “No es la miel para la boca del asno” (1.52.590). 6) In *DQ* 1.29, Cervantes describes a chaotic exchange between the barber and the priest prior to the exit from the Sierra Morena. The barber has been playing the part of the Princess of Micomicón’s squire in a subplot designed to convince Don Quijote to end his penitence and save her kingdom. The story works its magic and so, out of decorum, the barber dismounts his mule and offers it to the priest. Like Dulcinea’s ass in *DQ* 2.10, the animal reacts violently –“alzó un poco los cuartos traseros y dio dos coces en el aire”– causing the barber to lose his false beard, which forces the priest to fake a hasty miracle, muttering “cierto ensalmo apropiado para pegar barbas” (1.29.342). This all occurs just after Sancho has once again noticed the loss of his ass: “quedándose Sancho a pie, donde de nuevo se le renovó la pérdida del rucio” (1.29.339). 7) The novel’s most explicit allusion to Apuleius’s *The Golden Ass* is Don Quijote’s famous battle with the wineskins in *DQ* 1.35, which interrupts “La novela del curioso impertiente,” which, by the way, is the third philological problem indicated by Carrasco at the onset of part two (2.3.652: “no por mala ni por mal razonada, sino por no ser de aquel lugar, ni tiene que ver con la historia de su merced del señor don Quijote”). 8) In *DQ* 1.37, Cervantes deploys a religious ass when Captain Ruy Pérez de Viedma and Zoraida arrive at the second inn: “Entró luego tras él, encima de un jumento, una mujer a la morisca vestida, cubierto el rostro, con una toca en la cabeza... Pidió entrando un aposento, y como le dijeron que

en la venta no le había, mostró recibir pesadumbre y, llegándose a la que en el traje parecía mora, la apeó en sus brazos” (1.37.439). If we didn’t catch the climactic allusion to Joseph and Mary, we will get an effigy of the Virgin carried by penitents in *DQ* 1.52. 9) Finally, in *DQ* 1.42-44, Cervantes references his list of odd mounts once again via Don Luis, Doña Clara’s lover, who hides out in the inn’s stable disguised as another “mozo de mulas.”

In hindsight, then, asses are signposts in both parts of *DQ*. Any episode I cited might serve as a point of departure for assessing the animal’s meaning, but as per Auerbach, *DQ* 2.10 is special. It is the first of three encounters with Dulcinea and it leverages unforgiving reality, now glimpsed by our *hidalgo*, against chivalric fantasy, now embraced by our squire. It also performs a radical textual maneuver that directs our attention back to ass-themed passages in *DQ* 1 while simultaneously advising us to attend to their recurrence in what remains of *DQ* 2. American classicist Leo Strauss observed that great books teach their readers how to read them (ctd. by Palmer 142). In *DQ* 2.10 history’s greatest novel tells us it has always already been about asses. We should note the particular affinity between *DQ* 1.29 and 2.10, where mounts buck violently, forcing characters to take corrective actions, as well as that between *DQ* 1.23 and 2.25, where pack animals’ carcasses signal violence at the southern and eastern limits of Castile, respectively.

Before delving into the meaning of *DQ*’s donkeys, let’s specify Cervantes’s jujitsu in *DQ* 2.10. He has penned a case of retroactive “narrative metalepsis,” turning the novel into its own heuristic tool in order to vindicate his original intentions. The term’s roots help: “*meta-* [word-forming element meaning 1. ‘after, behind,’ 2. ‘changed, altered,’ 3. ‘higher, beyond;’ from Greek *meta* (prep.) meaning ‘in the midst of, in common with, by means of, in pursuit or quest of’] + *lepsis* [‘a taking,’ related to *lambanein*] or + *leps-* [future stem of *lambanein* ‘take hold of, grasp’]” (*Online Etymology Dictionary*). Harold Bloom defines the basic rhetorical figure of metalepsis as “the trope of a trope, the metonymic substitution of a word for a word already figurative,” but he then amplifies its potential by allowing it to take the form of a conceit and by adding a temporal inflection to it: “More broadly, a metalepsis or transumption is a scheme, frequently allusive, that refers the reader back to any previous scheme” (2003a: 74). Gérard Genette applies the term to narrative, calling metalepsis a “deliberate transgression of the threshold of embedding” (88), whereby a narrator or character interacts with readers in a way that exposes the artificial nature of fictional discourse. Cervantes’s technique in *DQ* 2.10 requires us to push the limits of these definitions. More than a symbolic arrangement referring to another, as per Bloom, the trope triggers retrospective meaning. Not only does it transmit an awareness of artistic illusion, as per Genette, it achieves a looping or “wormhole” effect by creating contact between distinct parts of a broader fictional universe. Above all, narrative metalepsis activates the latent metaphorical content of a previous passage, unleashing meaning *ex post facto*. Cervantes’s deployment of metalepsis in *DQ* 2.10 is even more complex: it reflects back on a supposed “error” published ten years prior and reclaims it as meaningful despite what some readers may have concluded.²

So what, Eric? Having described what Cervantes did, why would he do it? Perhaps he was just performing a joke, an elaborate literary display designed to undercut his critics’ complaints

² Metalepsis was a known poetic trope in early modern Spain, as evidenced by the Jesuit Cipriano Suárez’s popular manual of 1562, *Arte Rhetorica. Libri Tres* (Garrido Gallardo 560), as well as Fernando de Herrera’s epic annotated 1580 edition of *Obras de Garcilasso de la Vega*. These do not consider metalepsis in narratological terms, although Herrera’s definition hints at the sort of complexity we find in *DQ* 2.10: “metalésis, figura poetica y rara, que en la voz Latina es trasunción, cuando se va poco a poco en conocimiento de lo que se significa” (429). For a survey of the modern narratological implications of the term, see Pier.

about his narrative “errors” in *DQ* 1. Well, yes, but there’s a lot more to it. For starters, we should accept that allusions to all things asinine in *DQ* are evidence that Cervantes was self-consciously writing a specific type of novel known as the picaresque. *DQ* is Cervantes’s victory in the race to pen the great Spanish novel, a race which climaxed at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and a race that was understood, *de rigueur*, as a race to perfect the picaresque, a genre that was, for its part, grounded in the symbolic transformation of asses.

Editorial evidence for this is also substantial. The late-classical ur-text of the picaresque is Apuleius’s *The Golden Ass* (*Asinus aureus*) also referred to as *The Metamorphoses* (c.175). Lucius’s change from man into ass and then back into man again is why references to pack animals in picaresque novels cannot be ignored. The first Spanish variant is the anonymous *Lazarillo de Tormes* (c.1554). Famous for its realism, many think it is the original source of the picaresque and thus completely miss the metamorphosical implications of its three references to beasts of burden (cf. González Echeverría 194-212). Now, *The Golden Ass* was first printed in Spanish at Seville in 1513, followed by four editions toward the middle of the century: Zamora in 1536 and 1539, Medina del Campo in 1543, and Antwerp in 1551. It was then published in three expurgated editions right when Cervantes was writing *DQ*: Alcalá de Henares in 1584 and Madrid and Valladolid in 1601 (Menéndez Pelayo 72-79; Beardsley 29). For its part, *Lazarillo de Tormes*’s five earliest editions match the mid-century interest in Apuleius: Alcalá de Henares, Burgos, Medina del Campo, and Antwerp in 1554, and Antwerp again in 1555, along with an anonymous continuation. There followed an expurgated edition at Madrid in 1573 and then, like *The Golden Ass*, we have five editions from when Cervantes was composing *DQ*: Milán in 1587 (with continuation), Antwerp in 1595, Bergamo in 1597, Madrid in 1599 (expurgated), and Milan again in 1615 (expurgated and with continuation) (Escudero and Pinillos 20). Finally, the vanguard of fictional narrative *circa* 1605 was picaresque, roundly influenced by *The Golden Ass* and *Lazarillo de Tormes*. Just to name the three most important examples: Mateo Alemán publishes parts one and two of *El Guzmán de Alfarache* in 1599 and 1604, the anonymous *La pícaro Justina* appears in 1605, and the same year Francisco de Quevedo begins *La vida del buscón* (publ. 1626). As for Cervantes, in addition to *DQ* 1 and 2 in 1605 and 1615, he pens two overtly picaresque novellas, *Rinconete y Cortadillo* in 1604 and *El coloquio de los perros* in 1605. The prior is actually given to the priest by the innkeeper at the end of the 1605 *DQ* (1.47.542). Cervantes also cites Apuleius’s *The Golden Ass* explicitly in *El coloquio de los perros* and does the same with *Lazarillo de Tormes* twice in *DQ*, first in a dedicatory poem (1.preliminares.30.vv.18-20) and then in *DQ* 1.22 –i.e., just prior to the disappearance of Sancho’s ass– when Ginés de Pasamonte brags about his autobiography: “mal año para *Lazarillo de Tormes* y para todos cuantos de aquel género se han escrito o escibieren” (1.22.243). In short, it’s impossible to understand *DQ* without understanding the picaresque. The conventions of the novel *circa* 1605 and multiple texts by Cervantes tell us as much.³

But Eric, how does viewing *DQ* as a picaresque help us to understand it? Well, the classical and the early modern genre deploys symbolic asses to focus our attention on specific issues. I define picaresque novels as follows: episodic narratives centered on the literal or figurative metamorphoses of their protagonists which simultaneously serve as the bases for satirical

³ For *The Golden Ass*’s influence on the Spanish picaresque, see Ricapito and García Gual (1996, 2011: 188-89). For *Lazarillo de Tormes*’s debts to Apuleius, see Rico (55-62) and Vilanova (1989a, b, c). For Apuleius’s impact on *DQ*, see Cristóbal López, Petriconi, Prjevalinsky, Scobie, and Selig (1983). None of these grasp the broader metamorphosical implications of Apuleius’s symbolic ass. For Apuleius’s deeper, more structural and metamorphosical, effects on Cervantes, see Graf (2003, 2007, 2014a).

investigations of the abusive practices of the societies in which said protagonists move. Cervantes's picaresque targets two major abusive practices in Spain at the beginning of the seventeenth century: ethnic oppression and economic expropriation. On the one hand, *DQ* prods readers to swap racial hatred for miscegenation—i.e., transethnic and transcultural love and respect. On the other hand, it nudges us to scrap robbery, theft, and coercion in social relations and harness voluntary exchange—i.e., market commerce and work for pay. Cervantes leverages these imperatives with respect to two major social issues: 1) the conflict with the Moriscos of southern Spain, which climaxed between the Alpujarras War in 1568-70 and their expulsion in 1609-14; and 2) the rise of black African slavery, adopted in the early 1500s as a way to colonize America and then significantly expanded upon the annexation of Portugal in 1580.⁴

Before proceeding, we note that these matters were passionately disputed throughout the sixteenth century, and so Cervantes's views are not *sui generis*.⁵ Regarding slavery, we have the famous debate between the reformist dissenter Bartolomé de las Casas and the imperial apologist Ginés de Sepúlveda at Valladolid in 1550-51 over Spaniards' mistreatment of Native Americans and over their right to oppress so-called barbarians generally. Then we have Las Casas's expression of personal guilt *circa* 1563 concerning his choice to alleviate the suffering of Americans by advocating the importation of black African slaves (3.129.275). Arguments against the subjugation and eventual expulsion of the Moriscos abounded as well (cf. *DQ* 2.54.1067-76). Take the moral case made by the fabricators of the forged lead books unearthed at Granada between 1595 and 1606, who defended the besieged minority by alleging their primordial Christian status (cf. *DQ* 1.72.591).⁶ Take the economic case made by the Duke of Gandía, who claimed he was owed compensation for the expulsion of the Moriscos who worked his land (Monterde Real). Then there's Diego Hurtado de Mendoza—the most likely author of *Lazarillo de Tormes*—who regarded Spain's oppression of the Moriscos as both morally and fiscally stupid.⁷ The major painters of the era also highlighted these issues. The colored perspectivism deployed by El Greco (cf. *Saint Martin and the Beggar*, 1597-99) and Diego Velázquez (cf. *The Supper at Emmaes*, 1622-23) pit Christian morality against the looming expulsion and the rise of pigmentary racism, respectively.⁸ As for commercial exchange, the late scholastics knew all too well that the livelihoods of Spanish citizens depended on a healthy economy. Juan de Mariana put it as neatly as anyone ever has: “Si el comercio se suprimiera, ¿qué habría más triste ni más infeliz que la vida humana?” (389).⁹ Cervantes brings these issues together in *DQ* 1.9 when the second narrator finds the lost manuscript of *DQ* in the Alcaná marketplace in Toledo. Here a Christian outbids a silk

⁴ For the origins, types, and extent of slavery in sixteenth-century Spain, see Cortés López. For Morisco slavery in particular, see Martín Casares. For Cervantes's criticism of ethnocentrism, religious intolerance, and slavery, see Borouchoff, Gerli (1989), Márquez Villanueva (1975b, c), Martínez López, and Graf (1999, 2015).

⁵ For the early modern humanists' social and political criticism of the violence of chivalric fiction, see Adams. For a wide range of dissenting thinkers from Golden Age Spain, see Maravall.

⁶ For more on the lead books found at Granada, see Kendrick, and for their relation to the conclusion of *DQ* 1, see Case.

⁷ I take Mendoza's authorship of *Lazarillo de Tormes* as fairly settled by Mercedes Agulló y Cobo, at least such that the burden of proof now lies with those who would argue to the contrary. I also consider the miscegenistic and anti-slavery asses in *DQ* as further circumstantial evidence that *Lazarillo de Tormes* was indeed penned by Mendoza, who, in his *Guerra de Granada* about the Alpujarras War, was a vocal critic of Spanish conduct both prior to and during the conflict (Darst).

⁸ For more on El Greco's art as philosophical criticism of Felipe II, see Graf (2013a, b).

⁹ For the evolution of Mariana's very modern economic analysis, see Calzada. For Mariana's connections to Cervantes as well as the latter's symbolic mixture of an economic policy debate and the issues of slavery and racism, see Graf (2011, 2014a, b).

merchant for papers written in Arabic script, and then hires a Morisco to translate them, even bringing him into his home to facilitate the business. So, Cervantes allows that were it not for commerce and ethnic give-and-take, we wouldn't be reading the greatest novel ever written past *DQ* 1.8 (Graf 1999). But if late-Renaissance experience fostered rational critiques of the immorality, hypocrisy, and idiocy of ethnic oppression and economic expropriation; it is also true that picaresque literature came prepackaged with satirical denunciations of the same. Let's deal with the genre's arch representatives from early modern Spain and then classical antiquity.

The Spanish innovation to the picaresque was to incorporate the themes of race and ethnicity.¹⁰ *Lazarillo de Tormes*'s author signals skin pigment as an issue from the outset. Lazarillo's mother had a dark lover, Zaide, clearly of Moorish descent, who cared for beasts of burden—i.e., the picaresque symbol *sine qua non*. Lazarillo confesses he feared Zaide until he noticed that life got better when he visited. Finally, our future *pícaro* notes the racial hypocrisy of his half-brother, sired by Zaide, and concludes that said hypocrisy is a universal problem:

Ella y un hombre moreno de aquellos que las bestias curaban vinieron en conocimiento. Éste algunas veces se venía a nuestra casa y se iba a la mañana... Yo, al principio de su entrada, pesábame con él y habíale miedo, viendo el color y mal gesto que tenía; mas de que vi su venida mejoraba el comer, fuile queriendo bien, porque siempre traía pan, pedazos de carne y en el invierno leños, a que nos calentábamos.

De manera que, continuando la posada y conversación, mi madre vino a darme un negrito muy bonito, el cual yo brincaba y ayudaba a calentar. Y acuérdome que estando el negro de mi padraastro trebajando con el mozuelo, como el niño vía a mi madre y a mí blancos y a él no, huía dél, con miedo, para mi madre, y, señalando con el dedo, decía:

—¡Madre, coco!

Respondió él riendo:

—¡Hideputa!

Yo, aunque bien mochacho, noté aquella palabra de mi hermancico y dije entre mí: «¡Cuántos debe de haber en el mundo que huyen de otros porque no se veen a sí mismos!» (16-18)

If the author of *Lazarillo de Tormes* subsequently reveals that Zaide was a thief, his point is not to reinforce the black muleteer's already marginal status but, rather, to further criticize the hypocrisy of the dominant culture. Note how religious orthodoxy is a key target of this sentence, which also reveals that Zaide is a slave moved by a particular Christian emotion: “No nos maravillemos de un clérigo ni fraile porque el uno hurta de los pobres y el otro de casa para sus devotas y para ayuda de otro tanto, cuando a un pobre esclavo el amor le animaba a esto” (19).

Lazarillo de Tormes was written slightly prior to the rise of black African slavery in Spain, so the focus of its satire is still primarily the misguided persecution of *conversos* and Moriscos, Jewish and Moorish citizens who had converted to Christianity in order to stay in the country. In sixteenth-century Spain, Old Christians and the Inquisition were increasingly allied against these ethnic minorities and used blood purity laws and public displays of religious orthodoxy to exclude their rivals from office, expropriate their assets, and threaten them with expulsion. But what we also witness in *Lazarillo de Tormes* is that dark skin color has now become an additional signifier

¹⁰ For a shortsighted, academic distortion of the meaning of race in *Lazarillo de Tormes*, see Fra Molinero. For the complex dynamics of racism in early modern Spain, which involved both visible and invisible signs of ethnic difference, see Yerushalmi.

of subordination. Just as his care for beasts of burden combines with his black skin and slave status to indicate Zaide's inferior position *vis-à-vis* religious bigots, the novel's second symbolic deployment of a pack animal accentuates yet another critique of the populist fraud of orthodox belief. Near the end of the novel's fifth *tractado*, Lazarillo witnesses a scene staged by a town bailiff and a preacher, his latest master. The preacher rails against sin and urges people to buy his Papal bulls; the bailiff plays a skeptic who then pretends to be possessed by the devil and thus in need of the bulls' mystical powers. This anticipates the fake miracle of *DQ* 1.29 as well as the resounding cave of *DQ* 2.55. Note too how blackness is worked into Lazarillo's description, a touch of bitter irony in a trick designed to make an increasingly racist public embrace orthodoxy:

Apenas había acabado su oración el devoto señor mío, cuando el negro alguacil cae de su estado y da tan gran golpe en el suelo, que la iglesia toda hizo resonar, y comenzó a bramar y echar espumajos por la boca y torcella y hacer visajes con el gesto, dando de pie y de mano, revolviéndose por aquel suelo a una parte y a otra.

El estruendo y voces de la gente era tan grande, que no se oían unos a otros... Finalmente, algunos que allí estaban, y a mi parecer no sin harto temor, se llegaron y le trabaron de los brazos, con las cuales daba fuertes puñadas a los que cerca dél estaban. Otros le tiraban por las piernas y tuvieron reciamente, porque no había mula falsa en el mundo que tan recias coces tirase. (119-20)

The author of *Lazarillo de Tormes* makes his final use of the picaresque's magical ass in the sixth *tractado*. After a stint working for a poor painter, Lazarillo finds his best master yet, a chaplain of the Cathedral of Toledo who lends him a donkey for the purpose of carrying water up from the Tagus. Note three details here: 1) Lazarillo's first task is mixing pigments, 2) followed by a detailed financial arrangement that he makes with his new master *qua* business partner, 3) which then allows him for the only time in his life to eat well and to save money, even enough to purchase for himself the outer trappings of an *hidalgo*. The passage reassesses the repressed potential of Zaide. The moral: learn to disregard ethnic and religious differences via a market-based economy in which capital and work are harnessed so as to "alcanzar buena vida" for all.

Después desto, asenté con un maestro de pintar panderos, para molelle los colores, y también sufrí mil males.

Siendo ya en este tiempo buen mozuelo, entrando un día en la iglesia mayor, un capellán della me recibió por suyo; y púsome en poder un asno y cuatro cántaros y un azote, y comencé a echar agua por la cibdad. Éste fue el primer escalón que yo subí para venir a alcanzar buena vida, porque mi boca era medida. Daba cada día a mi amo treinta maravedís ganados, y los sábados ganaba para mí, y todo lo demás, entre semana, de treinta maravedís.

Fueme tan bien en el oficio, que al cabo de cuatro años que lo usé, con poner en la ganancia buen recaudo, ahorré para me vestir muy honradamente de la ropa vieja, de la cual compré un jubón de fustán viejo y un sayo raído de manga tranzada y puerta y una capa que había sido frisada, y una espada de las viejas primeras de Cuéllar. Desde que me vi en hábito de hombre de bien, dije a mi amo que se tomase su asno, que no quería más seguir ese oficio. (125-27)

The fact that in the end Lazarillo renounces the only office that has ever improved his life in a way free of moral decrepitude only underscores the sad fragility of the bourgeois mentality in late

sixteenth-century Spain, especially among the *hidalgo* caste. True to its literary genre, *Lazarillo de Tormes* deploys a remarkably transformative “golden ass” to satirize so many Spaniards’ rejection of work and savings as ways to make life better.¹¹

Expropriation and slavery as well as their antidotes, private property and commerce, are also fundamental themes in the classical ur-text of the picaresque, *The Golden Ass*. According to modern translator Jack Lindsay, Apuleius’s novel represents the Roman Empire at a crossroads. The situation is not unlike that of late sixteenth-century Spain:

The empire has spread over practically all that is known of the civilized world; there has been a steady growth of urbanization, trade, money-economy; local and tribal ways have gone down before the extension of Roman law with its strong emphasis in personal property... Yet under the impressive surfaces the corrosion was busily at work, sapping the urban bases, increasing instead of decreasing the differences between town and country, strengthening the big landlords and preparing the series of upheavals through the peasant-based army which led to the general crisis of the third century. (12)

That Apuleius intended his novel as a critique of the powerful who were corrupting the law in order to enrich themselves at the expense of the poor is most obvious in book nine’s rehearsal of a civil war between the state- and military-backed gentry and the peasantry. Lucius the ass and his latest master, a humble gardener, are guests at the house of a farmer when news arrives that the latter’s three sons have been massacred and had their land stolen by a plutocrat labeled “robber,” “rich oppressor,” “bloody man,” “murderer,” and “tyrant” (206-08). As Lucius’s master heads home, “shaking his head over the catastrophic fate of his friend’s house,” an insolent legionary restages and extends the tyranny of the plutocrat: “‘Where are you taking that ass?’ ‘To the next village,’ answered the gardener. ‘But I happen to want him,’ said the soldier, ‘So I’m commandeering him...’ With that, seizing my halter, he began to lead me off” (209).

Alongside Rome’s growing class conflict, we find Apuleius’s critique of the injustice of forced labor. The same book nine also contains Lucius’s detailed vision of slaves working at a bakery: “Their skin was striped all over with scourge-scars... Their brows were branded; their heads were half-shaved; irons clanked on their feet; their faces were sallow and ugly; the smoky gloom of the reeking overheated room had bleared and dulled their smarting eyes; and (like boxers who fight befouled with the dust of the arena) their faces were wanly smeared with the dirtied flour” (192). Lucius identifies with these slaves. They are the novel’s ultimate asses: “But how shall I describe the beasts, my comrades?... Dismayed at the graveyard-state of these animals (perhaps foretelling my own future), I recalled the happy days when I was Lucius; and hanging my head I mourned for this my final degradation” (192). Lindsay makes the connection: “Here the beast-of-burden is revealed as one with the slave-worker; and Apuleius’ criticism penetrates to the heart of the social problem of antiquity. Without this experience the ‘fall’ of Lucius would remain abstract; with it, it is seen to express the totality of the inner contradictions and conflicts of the ancient world” (22). Moreover, it is one of very few passages “in the whole of ancient literature which realistically looks at and examines the conditions of slave-exploitation on which the culture of the ancient world rested. And since Apuleius... is also depicting the hellish state from within,

¹¹ For Cristóbal de Villalón’s argument as early as 1541 that *hidalgos* should overcome their obsession with honor and instead work for a living, see D’Emic (100-06). For the general decay of the *hidalgo* caste in the sixteenth century, see Lloréns.

he may claim the proud position of being the only ancient writer with the courage, insight, and humanity to look clearly and unflinchingly at the ugly thing” (22).

Forced labor is the core social problem addressed by *The Golden Ass* and Lucius identifies strongly with the bakery slaves: *ergo* the novel’s metamorphosis is the main metaphor in Apuleius’s attack on this institution as the disgrace of the Roman Empire. In other words, he meant his novel to unleash a “moral earthquake” (214). This is why the villainous plutocrat of book nine is described as “master of an army of servants” (206), and why, toward the novel’s end, servants and slaves constantly intrude, hurtling into dining-rooms, bolting up from cellars, and testifying in courts (185, 205, 217). This is also why the novel hinges on people’s ability or inability to perceive the humanity of Lucius the ass. The critical irony of a sales pitch made by one of Lucius’s owners is patent: “I certainly wouldn’t like to bring the law down upon me for selling you a true-born Roman citizen as a slave... Why, that’s not an ass you’re looking at; it’s a lamb. He’s not bitter, nor is he a kicker. He’s such a model of an ass that you’d think he was a godfearing man hiding under an ass’s skin” (180). About to be butchered and served as a stag to a landlord, Lucius breaks his halter and escapes into a bedroom where, though trapped, he finds peace: “I slept the sleep of a human being as I had in the times long past” (186). At last, Lucius convinces humans that he isn’t mad with rabies: “in point of fact, the madness was all on their side of the fence... I patiently submitted to being patted, and handled, and rubbed on the ears, and led by the halter, and put through any trial that they liked –till my mild demeanour shamed them one and all for their overeasiness assumption of madness” (187).

A final point about *The Golden Ass*. Just as *Lazarillo de Tormes* closes its critique of an orthodox, racist Spanish public with a glance at the transformative, yet illusive, solution of commerce; Apuleius responds to the slave-based society of ancient Rome by making repeated nods to money, pricing, and economic exchange. The first line of the novel –“Business directed me to Thessaly” (33)– ironically foreshadows Lucius the ass selling for seventeen, twenty-four, fifty, and eleven pence in the final pages (189, 191, 203, 220). The sums Lucius the man later spends on religious ceremonies are also detailed (247-49). Most suggestive is the gardener’s comment upon purchasing Lucius at the peak of his value: “Too much... but the two of us together, I trust, will help each other to keep alive” (203-04). Not slavery, theirs is a relationship of mutual advantage and respect: “both my master and myself had meals equal in size and substance” (204). Likewise, the gardener’s generosity is the basis of his friendship with the farmer who loses his sons to the evil landlord: “One night a householder of the next village lost his way in the glooms of a moonless night. Drenched to the skin with rain, he turned his tired horse into our little garden; and being hospitably received (all things considered) he was provided with a night’s rest (the necessity he craved) though with no dainty extras. However, out of a grateful wish to remunerate his host, he promised to despatch from his farm some corn and oil, with two casks of wine” (204). In the end, Apuleius underscores this prime virtue of honest commerce as the essence of his protagonist’s redemption. The goddess Isis promises Lucius will regain human form; all he has to do is appear at a special ritual: “Tomorrow my priests will offer to me the first fruits of the year’s navigation. They will consecrate in my name a new-built ship” (238). On the heels of his final metamorphosis, Lucius the man describes the ceremony’s finale:

The spot chosen was the very beach where on the preceding day (while yet an ass) I had stabled myself. First, the images of the gods were orderly disposed; and then the high priest dedicated and consecrated to the Goddess a nobly built boat (scribbled all over with the

peculiar Egyptian marks) after purifying its torch, flame, egg, and sulphur, and pouring solemn prayers from his sanctified lips.

The shining-white sail of this blessed ship bore a brodered inscription repeating the words of the prayer for this year's prosperous navigation...

All the people (initiate or lay) zealously piled up winnowing-fans with aromatic scents and other such offerings, and threw libations of milk mixed with crumbs into the sea, until the ship, cargoes with plentiful gifts and auspicious devotions, was let slip from her anchoring ropes. She put out to sea with a mild breeze; all her own; and after she had sailed out of sight into the distance of her course, the bearers of the holy things reassumed their burdens and began a lively return journey to the temple in the same order and propriety as they had come. (244-45)

Here the miracle of Lucius's transformation from an enslaved ass into a human being is revealed as one with the miracle of commerce, and Apuleius's mercantile understanding of the cult of Isis offers a realistic counter to ancient Rome's shameful dependence on expropriation and bondage. The supreme allegorical gesture of *The Metamorphoses* is its placement of Lucius at the center of the two modes of ancient trade: at the dedication of a ship he changes from an ass into a man, *id est*, he becomes the focal point of a triangulated relation between transport on land (via the ass) and transport on water (via the ship). Just as the author of *Lazarillo de Tormes*, the philosopher Mariana, and Cervantes would conclude fourteen centuries later, the basis of a just and wealthy society that goes about its daily activities in harmony and decency is blessed commerce.

Cervantes understood and expanded the themes and symbols of the classical and early modern picaresque. Mysterious pack animals in *DQ* signal problems in need of solutions: ethnic oppression, as per *Lazarillo de Tormes*; slavery, as per *The Golden Ass*. The rotting mule found by our heroes in the Sierra Morena in *DQ* 1.23 and the rotting ass found by two alderman on the road to Zaragoza in *DQ* 2.25 indicate looming social collapse. By contrast, the arrival of the ex-slave Captain Viedma with the Moorish princess Zoraida on her *jumento* in *DQ* 1.37 and Sancho's embrace of his ass prior to his reunion with the exiled Morisco Ricote in *DQ* 2.53-54 indicate the potential of transethnic harmony. Similarly, the prices, exchanges, and economic calculations that dominate the story of Viedma and Zoraida's escape from Algiers and Ricote's offer to pay Sancho 200 *escudos* to help him recover his treasure indicate the role of commerce in facilitating said harmony.¹² Let's look at how *DQ*'s symbolic asses relate to race, slavery, and commerce.

From the outset of *DQ* Cervantes counters ethnic conflict and the impending expulsion of the Moriscos by advocating miscegenation and by mocking Old Christians' hypocritical attention to orthodoxy, blood purity, and skin color. There's immediate irony in the fact that Don Quijote is from "La Mancha," literally "the stain" or "the mark" of impurity. Details at the 1605 novel's end push racial dialectics: the "negras aguas" breached by the Caballero del Lago (1.50.569), the "cabra manchada" tracked down by Eugenio (1.50.574; cf. Márquez Villanueva 1975b), and the Virgin "cubierta de luto" carried by penitents "vestidos de blanco" (1.52.585). Cervantes regularly marks this race theme with asses. If Zoraida arrives on a *jumento*, Doña Clara's lover, Don Luis, who is both "marinero de amor" and "mozo de mulas" (1.43.500-01), is a projection of Viedma. A transethnic reworking of Christ's birth in Bethlehem, designed according to the classical

¹² For the exemplary and autobiographical aspects of Viedma's escape from Algiers as the organizational endpoint of *DQ*, see Murillo. For more on Zoraida as a subversive figure designed to counteract Reconquista nostalgia, see Gerli (1995: 40-60) and Graf (2003, 2007). For Ricote's fate as a serious challenge to Felipe III's policy of expulsion, see Márquez Villanueva (1975a).

picaresque's redemption of the hero, is fundamental to Cervantes's program. On his first sally, Don Quijote approaches an inn: "vio, no lejos del camino por donde iba, una venta, que fue como si viera una estrella que, no a los portales, sino a los alcázares de su redención le encaminaba" (1.2.48). Note how the Arabic term "alcázares" underscores the transcultural point of the guiding star. Then the hero encounters two prostitutes, "las cuales iban a Sevilla con unos arrieros" (1.2.49), and the knight's first battle is with these same mule-drivers. After another "mozo de mulas" thrashes Don Quijote (1.4.70) and he heads home draped over Pedro Alonso's ass in *DQ* 1.5, the race theme surfaces again. Atop Alonso's ass, the knight identifies himself as "el moro Abindarráez" and affirms that his mistress is also Moorish: "esta hermosa Jarifa que he dicho es ahora la linda Dulcinea del Toboso" (1.5.73). This asinine muddling of Don Quijote's ethnic identity portend the novel's great mockeries of the Inquisition in *DQ* 1.6 and 2.73. At the second inn, when Don Quijote gropes the servant girl Maritornes, we learn that her real lover is yet another *arriero*, a man who is even related—"algo pariente"—to the novel's original Moorish author "Cide Mahamate Benengeli" (1.16.171). Such ironies dent the *hidalgo*'s ethnocentrism as well as that of any readers who might identify with him out of nostalgia for the Reconquista.

An even more complex interweaving of asses and race occurs throughout *DQ* 1.25. As indicated by Don Quijote's anxiety about his squire's desire to escort him "asnalmente" (1.7.92), the animal's symbolism extends to Sancho. In *DQ* 1.25 Sancho's ass is absurdly intermittent. In the first sentence, the narrator says the squire follows the knight "en su asno, de muy mala gana" (1.25.270). Shortly thereafter, the knight recognizes the same when he silences his squire: "Por tu vida Sancho, que calles, y de aquí adelante entremétete en espolear a tu asno, y deja de hacello en lo que no te importa" (1.25.273). Then comes the first reference to the mysterious robbery of Sancho's ass. Don Quijote decides to do penance, so he unsaddles Rocinante and sets him free. At this, Sancho, who must report his master's suffering to Dulcinea, remembers the theft of his *rucio*, about which, until now, readers have been unaware. He also says that he would rather not walk to El Toboso: "Bien haya quien nos quitó ahora del trabajo de desenaldar al rucio... Y en verdad, señor Caballero..., será bien tornar a ensillar a Rocinante, para que supla la falta del rucio... porque, en resolución, soy mal caminante" (1.25.280). The missing ass is established again after Don Quijote underscores his plan to injure himself during his penance: "será necesario que me dejes algunas hilas para curarme, pues que la ventura quiso que nos faltase el bálsamo que perdimos" (1.25.281). In Apuleian fashion, Sancho's response links the loss of his ass to the problem of curing his master's madness: "Más fue la pérdida del asno... pues se perdieron en él las hilas y todo" (1.25.281). Similarly, Sancho's last references to his missing ass in *DQ* 1.25 stress the idea that the ass's humanity as well as our relative ability to empathize with it are at issue. First, the usually ethnocentric Sancho acknowledges the propriety of Don Quijote's disregard for Dulcinea's race by way of a self-reflexive equivalence that reads like a nod to the classically informed reader: "Digo que en todo tiene vuestra merced razón... y que yo soy un asno. Más no sé yo para qué nombro asno en mi boca, pues no se ha de mentar la sogá en casa del ahorcado" (1.25.286). He then complains that his lost *rucio* has left him too emotionally disturbed to witness Don Quijote's penance: "que me dará mucha lástima y no podré dejar de llorar, y tengo tal la cabeza, del llanto que anoche hice por el rucio, que no estoy para meterme en nuevos lloros" (1.25.288).

Parallel to all this intermittent assishness in *DQ* 1.25, in Lazarillian fashion, Cervantes gives free rein to a disorienting examination of both Dulcinea's and Don Quijote's ethnicities. The miscegenation theme appears early in the chapter when Don Quijote declares his intention to imitate Amadís of Gual "cuando halló en una fuente las señales de que Angélica la Bella había cometido vileza con Medoro" (1.25.275). In Ariosto's *Orlando furioso*, Medoro is a Moor who

leaves testimony in Arabic script near an idyllic fountain of having had sexual relations with Angélica. Next, when Sancho realizes that Dulcinea is really Aldonza Lorenzo, he describes her in a way that echoes the Muslim call to prayer from a minaret: “se puso un día encima del campanario del aldea a llamar unos zagales suyos... y aunque estaban de allí más de media legua, así la oyeron como si estuvieran al pie de la torre” (1.25.283). Ethnic matters become even more muddled when the squire intimates that Aldonza is a whore: “tiene mucho de cortesana: con muchos se burla” (1.25.283). Finally, Don Quijote makes the stunning admission that he knows perfectly well that Dulcinea is not a princess but, rather, a common peasant: “bástame a mí pensar y creer que la buena de Aldonza Lorenzo es hermosa y honesta, y en lo del linaje, importa poco” (285). In other words, in *DQ* 1.25 both knight and squire recognize that Dulcinea is in reality more like the ethnically transgressive prostitute Maritones than, say, Guinevere. All the while, Sancho’s vanishing ass underscores the modern metamorphosis of Don Quijote’s love object. Similarly, in the next chapter, after Don Quijote reverts back to seeing Dulcinea as racially pure –“osaré jurar yo que no ha visto en todos los días de su vida moro alguno” (1.26.291)–, in what amounts to a kind of transitive poetic justice, Sancho literally beats himself up –“se dio media docena de puñadas en el rostro y en las narices, que se las bañó todas en sangre” (1.26.295). The priest and the barber ask him why he does this. He says it is because he has lost his master’s promissory note of three donkeys to compensate him for his lost *rucio*: “¿Qué me ha de suceder– respondió Sancho–, sino el haber perdido de una mano a otra, en un estante, tres pollinos, que cada uno era como un castillo?... Y con esto les contó la pérdida del rucio” (1.26.295-96). Cervantes maintains the same dynamic in *DQ* 2. The miscegenistic relationship between the Morisco Ricote’s daughter Ana Félix and Don Gaspar Gregorio revisits *DQ* 1’s potential for ethnic harmony in Viedma and Zoraida. After Sancho refuses Ricote’s plea for help recovering his treasure in *DQ* 2.54, then, from a picaresque perspective, Sancho is punished for rejecting national miscegenation when he falls into a cave with his ass in *DQ* 2.55. In Apuleian fashion, the *rucio*’s eerily self-conscious cries remind us of Sancho’s denial of Ricote’s humanity—i.e., that the former governor has endorsed Felipe III’s policy of ethnic expulsion in 1609-14. Moreover, Sancho’s use of an asinine refrain to ratify his story – “caí en esta sima donde yago, el rucio conmigo, que no me dejará mentir, pues por más señas, está aquí conmigo” (2.55.1081) –, a refrain also used by the second barber in part one (1.44.519), further makes the animal into an ominous emblem of the grim truth.

Let’s finish with asses and race by returning to *DQ* 2.10. Critics have pointed out that Dulcinea’s toponym El Toboso was home to a number of Moriscos relocated there after the Alpujarras War (Castro 81; Selig 1984: 405). By overemphasizing the races of Dulcinea’s steeds in *DQ* 2.10, Cervantes also tells us as much. In a general picaresque sense, her metonymic contact with a complex series of animals relates her to the era’s major domestic social, political, and military problem. But the issue of race is also on display in a specifically Lazarillian way through the episode’s subtle and ironic allusions to contrasting cultures and colors. Ethnic mixing is the essence of *DQ* 2.10 well before Sancho departs for El Toboso. In the opening paragraph the narrator previews the adventure by claiming that the truth “siempre anda sobre la mentira como el aceite sobre el agua”; Don Quijote soon says he is sending Sancho to El Toboso in order to observe how Dulcinea reacts to his overture, “si muda los colores el tiempo que la estuvieres dando mi embajada”; and, echoing the knight’s redemptive “alcázares” in *DQ* 1.2, Sancho affirms that “si anoche no hallamos los palacios o alcázares de mi señora, agora que es de día los pienso hallar” (2.10.700-01). On his way to El Toboso, in his interior dialogue, Sancho repeats the Moorish calque for Dulcinea’s home –“Mi amo dice que han de ser unos reales palacios o unos soberbios alcázares”– and then he reasons that he can fool Don Quijote because he is “de locura que las más

veces toma unas cosas por otras y juzga lo blanco por negro y lo negro por blanco” (2.10.702-03). The black-white contrast appears twice more, when the knight asks for Sancho’s report –“¿Podré señalar este día con piedra blanca o con negra?”– and when Sancho, again in the context of weird mounts, cannot abide his master’s inability to see what he sees: “¿Y es posible que tres hacaneas, o como se llaman, blancas como el ampo de la nieve, le parezcan a vuesa merced borricos?” (2.10.704-06). Lastly, recall that Sancho compares Duclinea to the “más diestro cordobés o mexicano” (2.10.708). The lesson against racism applies internationally as well.

We should also consider the mounts themselves in *DQ* 2.10. The spots of the “caneas remendadas” and the stripes of the “cebra” (2.10.705, 708) echo the subversive metonymy found in the Old Christian Sancho’s neither black nor white *rucio* as well as the second barber’s *asno pardo* in *DQ* 1. Similarly, Cervantes stresses the sexual core of transnational miscegenation when the knight promises his squire three *crías* (“fillies”) born to his mares on the public pasture back home (2.10.705), thereby insinuating a long list of love stories in both parts of the novel, from Don Quijote’s unrelenting desire for Maritornes to Viedma’s and Gregorio’s respective devotions to Zoraida and Ana Félix. Even more tantalizing, Sancho’s flawed reference to the peasant women’s steeds as “Canaanites” ties ethnic conflict in Spain to the Old Testament. According to William G. Dever, “Canaanite is by far the most common ethnic term in the Hebrew Bible” and it also self-consciously refers to a people with whom Israelites shared a “common remote ancestry and once common culture” (219). In sum, a lighthearted, farcical reading of this episode ignores too much. The chain of mounts in *DQ* 2.10 transforms the mistress of the knight’s heart into an ethnic enigma, and when Don Quijote finally kneels before her “sublimada presencia” (2.10.707), the irony is that Dulcinea may be black, white, brown, Moorish, Christian, Jewish, or Canaanite. And that is the point of the Spanish picaresque: racism in Iberia, at the frontier between Europe and Africa, is absurd. All of this harks back to the original satire of *DQ* 1.5-6, when an ass shuttled a Moorish Don Quijote back home to face the Inquisition.

Now for the relation between asses and slavery in *DQ*. Whereas Apuleius connects the ass to the slave in his novel’s finale and Lazarillo notes early on that Zaide is a slave who cares for *bestias*, Cervantes is more subtle. He announces the slavery theme in isolation in the 1605 prologue via a quote from Aesop misattributed to Horace –“Non bene pro toto libertas venditur auro” ‘Liberty cannot be sold for all the world’s gold’ (1.prólogo.14)–, and again in the first dedicatory poem, when he honors “el negro Lat[ino]” (1.preliminares.23.v.43), a freed black African slave who became a professor of Latin and wrote a famous epic poem about the Battle of Lepanto—a poem, by the way, in which slavery is a pivotal issue. The whipping of the shepherd boy Andrés tied to a tree by his master Juan Haldudo in *DQ* 1.4 unveils Don Quijote’s true calling as righter of the wrong of forced labor. Ironically, Don Quijote remains inept at this calling. While he thinks he has saved Andrés –“hoy quitó el látigo de la mano a aquel despiadado enemigo que tan sin ocasión vapulaba a aquel delicado infante” (1.4.67)–, the reality is more cruel: once the knight leaves, Haldudo reties Andrés to the tree, “donde le dio tantos azotes, que le dejó por muerto” (1.4.66). Cervantes then gradually unveils the institution of chattel slavery as a theme over the remainder of part one, first via Sancho’s fantasy about enslaving the citizens of Micomicón, located in equatorial Africa (1.29.340), and then via Viedma’s enslavement in Algiers, which for its part is a projection of Cervantes’s own experience (1.454-71).¹³ From a broader perspective, the *azotes* suffered by Andrés anticipate: Don Quijote’s deceptively motiveless penance in the Sierra Morena, Sancho’s implicit abuse of black African slaves in Micomicón, the brutal mistreatment of Christian slaves witnessed by Viedma in Algiers (1.40.463), the self-directed

¹³ For Cervantes’s personal experience of slavery as formative, see Abi-Ayad and Arrabal.

suffering of the penitents “abriendo las carnes” at the end of part one (1.52.586), and, finally, the insistence throughout the second half of *DQ* 2 that Dulcinea’s enchantment can’t be broken unless Sancho submits to 3,300 lashes (2.35.923, *passim*). The impending beating of Sancho reaches hilarious extremes in the 1615 novel’s final chapters, where Don Quijote offers to purchase his lashes, even allowing Sancho to set a price: “a cuartillo cada uno” (2.71.1199-1200). In his own words Sancho returns home “si no muy rico, muy bien azotado” (2.74.1209). This is the novel’s overarching nexus of poetic justice and irony. By whipping himself in *DQ* 2, Sancho assumes the slave status which, with Don Quijote’s implied assistance, he would have forced on the citizens of Micomicón in *DQ* 1. The moral difference, of course, is that he does so voluntarily and only once Don Quijote agrees to pay him; and the economic difference, upon closer examination, is that he has indeed been made relatively rich. We’ll do the math regarding this last point later.

The lashings experienced by Andrés at the opening of *DQ* 1 and Sancho at the closing of *DQ* 2 reinforce the idea that the race-based slavery theme of Micomicón and the picaresque symbolism of Sancho’s ass function in concert throughout the Sierra Morena episodes of *DQ* 1. Sancho alludes back to this linkage when he tries to clarify his missing ass to Carrasco at the beginning of *DQ* 2 –“viniendo con la señora princesa Micomicona, conocí mi asno” (2.4.657)–, ironically insinuating both an Apuleian and a Lazarillian epiphany about the humanity of others. Most readers think of Sancho as likeable, a kind of happy, fat Mexican peasant, as gullible as he is jocular. Though correct at times, at others this view couldn’t be more off. Sancho’s slaver fantasy is a case in point (cf. Redondo). Recall that the squire’s *rucio* vanishes in *DQ* 1.25, coinciding with Don Quijote’s penance and his vacillations about Aldonza Lorenzo’s ethnicity; then it magically returns in *DQ* 1.46, right when peace is finally brought to the second inn. Likewise, Sancho’s flickering ass plots the invention, evolution, and dissolution of the Micomicón subplot—i.e., the narrative that leads the squire to fantasize about enslaving black Africans. First, in *DQ* 1.25, Sancho self-identifies as an ass: “yo soy un asno” (1.25.286). Next, at the end of *DQ* 1.26, Sancho apprises the priest and the barber of “la pérdida del rucio” (1.26.296) and these two promptly formulate the backstory of the Princess of Micomicón to get Don Quijote to leave the Sierra Morena. In *DQ* 1.29, in a charged sequence that occurs at the peak of this story’s effectiveness, Sancho laments having lost his ass only to then discount it as he savors his political fortune: “se le renovó la pérdida del rucio, con la falta que entonces le hacía; mas todo lo llevaba con gusto, por parecerle que ya su señor estaba puesto en camino y muy a pique de ser emperador, porque sin duda alguna pensaba que se había de casar con aquella princesa y ser por lo menos rey de Micomicón (1.29.339-40). He renews his regret at the thought of reigning over black Africans, until he hits on his disgraceful idea: “solo le daba pesadumbre el pensar que aquel reino era en tierra de negros y que la gente que por sus vasallos le diesen habían de ser todos negros; a lo cual hizo luego en su imaginación un buen remedio, y díjose a sí mismo: –¿Qué se me da a mí que mis vasallos sean negros? ¿Habrà más que cargar con ellos y traerlos a España, donde los podré vender y adonde me los pagarán de contado?” (1.29.340). Andrés, the original slave-ass figure from *DQ* 1.4, reappears in *DQ* 1.31, further hinting at the darkening conflict between Don Quijote’s chivalric ideals and Sancho’s forced-labor fantasy about an African country he describes as “mayor que Portugal y que Castilla juntos” (1.31.362). According to Don Quijote’s memory, Andrés had complained about his master, “no me azota sino porque le pido mi salario,” at which point the knight had freed him and made his master fork over his back pay; but according to Andrés, “el fin del negocio sucedió muy al revés de lo que vuestra merced se imagina” (1.31.365). Given the nature of his own plans, Sancho’s reaction conveys more black irony: “Sacó de su repuesto Sancho

un pedazo de pan y otro de queso, y dándoselo al mozo, le dijo: –Tomá, hermano Andrés, que a todos nos alcanza parte de vuestra desgracia” (1.31.367).

The unraveling of the Micomicón plot, which amounts to Sancho’s disillusionment about becoming a rich slaver, is also marked by symbolic asses. Sancho’s disappointment starts in *DQ* 1.35, upon realizing that Don Quijote’s battle with the giant besieging Micomicón was just his somnambulant attack on the innkeeper’s wineskins. It’s no accident that the famous interruption of “La novela del curioso impertinente” represents Cervantes’s most explicit allusion to *The Golden Ass*, which contains an early brawl between Lucius and magical wineskins. Several chapters on, Sancho overhears the story of Don Fernando and Dorotea and realizes the latter cannot be the Princess of Micomicón. He confronts Don Quijote about the “metamorfóseos” and the “mutación de la señora princesa Micomicona” (1.37.437-38). At the end of the same chapter, Cervantes complements this Apuleian language via the arrival of “la mora y el captivo,” with Zoraida atop her ass (1.37.439-42). Finally, in *DQ* 1.46, right after his ass inexplicably reappears in the inn’s stable, Sancho voices utter dismay regarding his lost lucre: “esta señora que se dice ser reina del gran reino Micomicón no lo es más que mi madre” (1.46.533). But the most amazing aspect of the dynamic between Sancho’s ass and the slavery theme is that, as the fantasy of reconquering and selling the citizens of Micomicón comes undone, Sancho’s ass gradually reconstitutes itself through a series of metonymies (cf. Flores). First, Sancho decides to sleep, “echándose sobre los aparejos de su jumento” (1.42.499); that night Maritornes uses “el cabestro del jumento de Sancho Panza” to make “una lazada corrediza” with which she ties Don Quijote’s wrist to the side of the inn’s barn (1.43.507-08); and finally, the next morning, she sets the knight free: “desató, sin que nadie lo viese, el cabestro que a don Quijote sostenía” (1.44.511). Can readers “see” the intricate string of relations between ass, slave, peasant, and *hidalgo*? Lastly, the second barber, the one unasssed by Don Quijote in the “Mambrino’s Helmet” episode of *DQ* 1.21, appears and lays claim to his animal’s trappings. Cervantes’s narrator again hints that by now informed readers should “see” the coordinated resurrection of Sancho’s stolen mount: “el cual barbero, llevando su jumento a la caballeriza, vio a Sancho Panza que estaba aderezando no sé qué de la albarda, y así como la vio la conoció” (1.44.518). Bringing the point home, when the second barber accuses knight and squire of robbery, his oath incorporates the animal at the center of picaresque satire: “allí está mi asno en el establo que no me dejará mentir” (1.44.519), a phrase that foreshadows the final reemergence of Sancho’s ass, in its entirety and in that very same stable, in *DQ* 1.46. Something is increasingly rotten in the transatlantic super state of Spain, and Cervantes is sick enough at heart to have woven a fiction about it. Thus, for readers who missed it, Cervantes allows *DQ* 2 to revisit and clarify the ass-slave connection in *DQ* 1. At the end of *DQ* 2.24, prior to the ass-laden “Braying Tale” of *DQ* 2.25, we find our author’s most explicit criticism of black African slavery. Don Quijote complains about the forgotten lives of old soldiers: “porque no es bien que se haga con ellos lo que suelen hacer los que ahorran y dan libertad a sus negros cuando ya son viejos y no pueden servir, y echándolos de casa con título de libres los hacen esclavos de la hambre, de quien no piensan ahorrarse sino con la muerte” (2.24.835). Here one can hear the hero of Lepanto identifying with the slaves of Micomicón.

Now let’s look at commerce as the potential remedy for the injustices involving theft, coercion, and slavery in *DQ*. As critic David Quint pointed out in his book *Cervantes’s Novel of Modern Times*, Cervantes’s subversion of the fantasy of chivalric romance involves a turn toward the socializing solution of economic realism. The idea is there from the outset, and Cervantes’s attention to economic details and calculations grows astonishingly complex as the novel progresses. One of the first effects of the *hidalgo*’s madness is economic: “que olvidó casi de todo

punto... aun la administración de su hacienda,” to such an extreme that “vendió muchas hanegas de tierra de sembradura para comprar libros de caballerías en que leer” (1.1.37). Don Quijote’s first lesson conveyed to him by the first innkeeper revisits this problem: “Preguntóle si traía dineros; respondió don Quijote que no traía blanca, porque él nunca había leído en las historias de los caballeros andantes que ninguno los hubiese traído. A esto dijo el ventero que se engañaba, que, puesto caso que en las historias no era menester escribir una cosa tan clara y necesaria de traerse como eran dineros y camisas limpias, no por eso se había de creer que no los trujeron” (1.3.56). The innkeeper repeats his point –“que no caminase de allí adelante sin dineros” (1.3.57)– and when he knights our hero, he pretends to hold a Bible, but it’s actually an accounting ledger: “un libro donde asentaba la paja y cebada que daba a los arrieros” (1.3.60). Ironic encounters with economic reality linger in *DQ* 1.4, when Don Quijote subtly miscalculates Andrés’s salary – “preguntó don Quijote que cuánto le debía su amo. Él dijo que nueve meses, a siete reales cada mes. Hizo la cuenta don Quijote y halló que montaban sesenta y tres reales” (1.4.64)– and then attacks “unos mercaderes toledanos que iban a comprar seda a Murcia” (1.4.67). In another series, the second narrator relates how he paid for the translation of the lost manuscript that he bought at the Toledan marketplace in *DQ* 1.9; Sancho then ponders the production costs and profit margin involved in selling the “Bálsamo de Fierabrás” in *DQ* 1.10; and then Don Quijote muddles the origins of private property and the law in his “golden age speech” in *DQ* 1.11.¹⁴ The theme continues: Sancho’s “manteamiento” in *DQ* 1.17 is punishment for the fact that neither knight nor squire pay for their stay at the second inn. Don Quijote and Sancho’s robbery of the second barber in *DQ* 1.21, followed by Sancho’s theft of Cardenio’s 100 *escudos* in *DQ* 1.23, anticipates the immorality of the squire’s plan to sell slaves in *DQ* 1.29. Contrastive and detailed resolutions to all this abuse appear in the 1605 conclusion: Viedma’s freedom is purchased by Zoraida in *DQ* 1.39-41; Don Quijote settles a dispute between the innkeeper and two unnamed guests who “habían intentado irse sin pagar lo que debían” but then decide to pay what they owe “por persuasión y buenas razones de don Quijote, más que por amenazas” (1.44.515-18); and, finally, at the beginning of *DQ* 1.46, the priest and Fernando pay the second barber and the innkeeper for all damages and costs incurred by knight and squire.

The same bourgeois trajectory structures *DQ* 2, and in harmony with issues raised in *DQ* 1. As critic Carroll Johnson demonstrated in his book *Cervantes and the Material World*, the entire novel dramatizes the issue of Sancho’s salary, which Don Quijote rejects at first, but then gradually comes to accept (1.18.196, 1.20.217-22, 1.21.234, 1.46.538-39, 2.4.657, 2.7.680-84, 2.28.864-67, 2.74.1219).¹⁵ Discussions of Sancho’s salary become particularly acute in *DQ* 2. Early on Sancho estimates the cost of his beatings on their previous outing and even suggests prorating his services, at which point Don Quijote says that he might hire another squire, perhaps even Carrasco, an idea that Sancho rushes to quell (2.4.657, 2.7.681-85). Later, in *DQ* 2.28 and 2.71 Sancho’s compensation is actually calculated with great precision. Other economic ideas connect *DQ* 2 back

¹⁴ For interpretations of Don Quijote’s “golden age speech” in *DQ* 1.11 as Cervantes’s critique of private property, see Byrne (42) and Pérez de Antón. In my view, both critics get it backwards. At this early stage of the novel, Cervantes is still mocking Don Quijote’s naiveté and his unwillingness to pay for goods and services. As per Claude Frédéric Bastiat, echoing Aquinas and the scholastics of Salamanca, “Life, liberty, and property do not exist because men have made laws. On the contrary, it was the fact that life, liberty, and property existed beforehand that caused men to make laws in the first place” (2).

¹⁵ Johnson’s reading is highly informative regarding the specific economic meanings of many of Cervantes’s textual details. His general idea that Cervantes is describing “stillborn capitalism” is also useful. Nevertheless, his academic bias against the free market leads to an inability to appreciate Cervantes’s Salamantine respect for market mechanisms. For this reason, Quint’s reading is more logically consistent.

to *DQ* 1. Like the first innkeeper in *DQ* 1.3, Teresa says that Sancho should carry money on his second sally (2.5.666), advice that comes in handy after the “Enchanted Boat” episode, when Sancho “pagó por el barco cincuenta reales” (2.30.874). Similarly, when Sancho reminisces about finding Cardenio’s bag of 100 *escudos* in the Sierra Morena, he considers what he would do with it now in terms of investment options: “lo llevo a mi casa, y echo censos y fundo rentas y vivo como un príncipe” (2.13.730). This is not random. Cervantes had first alluded to the *censo* in a preliminary poem in the 1605 novel when he compared publishing a bad novel to getting stuck on the wrong side of this thorny financial instrument: “el que imprime neceda[des] / dalas a censo perpe[tuo]” (1.preliminares.24.v.60).

Salary negotiations, Teresa’s advice, and Sancho’s interest in fiscal contracts in *DQ* 2 indicate the contrast between malicious expropriation and lawful exchange that we saw in *DQ* 1. Recall that in *DQ* 1 the labyrinthical monetary details of Viedma’s story show the way out of the Sierra Morena’s moral morass of robbery, theft, and slavery (cf. Herrero). Well, things also get off track toward the middle of the 1615 novel. Sancho’s self-interest takes an unsavory turn when the Duke gifts him a “vestido de monte... verde de finísimo paño,” and he greedily accepts it “con intención de venderle en la primera ocasión que pudiese” (2.34.913). Sancho’s reign over Barataria contains episodes that signal pettiness and corruption everywhere, and given his own values and past acts, his legalistic parsimony is ironic, even hypocritical. He judges and levies fines in cases in which citizens swindle and steal from each other (2.45.993-98). A farmer asks for a state loan of 600 *escudos* and Sancho expresses moral outrage (2.47.1013). A gambler wins 1,000 *reales* at cards, but only tips four *reales* instead of the customary eight (2.49.1026). Meanwhile, in his letter to Don Quijote, Sancho ominously claims to resist the temptations of tyranny and bribery: “Hasta agora no he tocado derecho ni llevado cohecho” (2.51.1051). The bandit Roque Guinart makes matters even darker. Representing power’s extreme potential to corrupt us all, Roque divvies up stolen booty with supposed equanimity, formulates his acts of robbery and extortion in terms of loans, and dispenses his personal brand of justice with horrifying and lethal spontaneity (2.60.1124-28).

As in *Lazarillo de Tormes* and *The Golden Ass*, to outwit tyranny we must attend to prices and sums, that is, to Cervantes’s detailed recording of the calculus involved in his characters’ transactions, debts, loans, and investments. This is especially true in *DQ* 2. Roque’s casual comment that others should do the math of his crimes, “porque yo soy mal contador” (2.60.1127), challenges us to do it ourselves. *DQ* 2.62 discloses the same idea via a symbolically reflexive series. We learn that Don Antonio Moreno’s magical talking head cost 1,000 *escudos* (2.62.1135), we watch our knight tour Barcelona with “Este es don Quijote de la Mancha” written on his back, and we get an assessment of the cost and profit involved in printing books, among them a continuation of *DQ* (2.62.1144-45). To paraphrase, Cervantes’s novel advances a philosophy of commerce that requires cogitation—i.e., that we perform deliberate accounting in our heads as we read. In classical and early modern picaresque fashion, *DQ* teaches us to “follow the money.” When we do, economic logic and commercial morality begin to emerge and we recognize problems we might not have otherwise. For example, given that one *ducado* equals eleven *reales*, Don Quijote instantly realizes that if the printer in *DQ* 1.62 expects 1,000 *ducados* profit by selling 2,000 copies at six *reales* each, then he means to clear 11,000 *reales* profit on sales of 12,000 *reales*. But this leaves only 1,000 *reales* for production costs and commissions to dealers. The same *hidalgo* who once proved unable to administer his own household in *DQ* 1.1, who couldn’t tell a Bible from a ledger in *DQ* 1.3, and who miscalculated Andrés’s salary in *DQ* 1.4, has now risen to Roque’s challenge, revealing himself to be remarkably quick with numbers and value

conversions. He's even takes a sarcastic swipe at the printer's business model: "¡Bien está vuesa merced en la cuenta!" (2.62.1145). By the same token, if we read with attention, we find that the modern ethic of *DQ* 1—that innkeepers must get paid—has taken hold, especially with a certain peasant who dreamed of slavery. Just pages before the counterexample of Roque, we find a more responsible squire: "Pagó Sancho al ventero magníficamente" (2.59.1115). Likewise, and echoing the final glimpse at savings and work in *Lazarillo de Tormes*'s sixth *tractado*, Teresa writes a letter to Sancho in which she informs him that their daughter is selling lace products to contribute to her dowry: "gana cada día ocho maravedís horros" (2.52.1060), meaning she clears this much after her costs. According to Rico's summary of some of the era's prices (1.tasa.3n4), and assuming Sanchica works every day, fifty-five *maravedís* would buy her a chicken every week—i.e., she's accumulating good money for herself and a potential partner.

Sanchica's situation sounds virtuous, but it also connotes dark irony by recalling a euphemism for the arbitrariness and corruption of government which has already been used twice in *DQ*: "la ley del encaje" (1.11.123, 2.42.971). The cynical note hidden in Sanchica's honest work for modest profit calls for a calculating and critical approach Sancho's reign over Barataria. In his letter to his master, the governor insists that he rules with reason and without graft (2.51.1051). After he resigns, however, he makes the claim *ad nauseam*: "saliendo yo desnudo, como salgo, no es menester otra señal para dar a entender que he gobernado como un ángel" (2.53.1066-67); "ni he tenido lugar de hacer cohechos ni de cobrar derechos... entré desnudo, y desnudo me hallo: ni pierdo ni gano. Si he gobernado bien o mal, testigos he tenido delante, que dirán lo que quisieren" (2.55.1082); "esta dádiva no se le puede dar nombre de cohecho... entré desnudo en el gobierno y salgo desnudo dél" (2.57.1089-90). As both he and the narrator do in *DQ* 2.10, Sancho protests so much here that we have reason to doubt him. Follow the money. Just as Sancho makes off with 100 *escudos* of *DQ* 1, in *DQ* 2 he accepts 200 *escudos* from the disreputable Duke (2.57.1090, 2.58.1095). And Sancho's reign? At first glance he's another Solomon, but an examination of "Las constituciones del gran gobernador Sancho Panza" (2.51.1053) reveals several deeply flawed ordinances. He fixes the maximum price of shoes, which, as any of the era's scholastics could have told him, only hurts Barataria's poorest citizens, who can now anticipate fewer and lower quality shoes. The stupidity of this policy is sarcastically foreshadowed by Don Quijote's melancholic meditation on his own poverty: "consolóse con ver que Sancho le había dejado unas botas de camino, que pensó ponerse otro día" (2.44.985). Sancho's surrender to a harsher life after he retires from Barataria echoes the same point: "volvámonos a andar por el suelo con pie llano, que si no le adornaren zapatos picados de cordobán, no le faltarán alpargatas toscas de cuerda" (2.53.1066). Worse still, the governor raises the unemployment rate when he fixes the maximum salaries of servants, a blistering irony given his expressed desire for a fixed salary from Don Quijote.¹⁶

As Francisco Márquez Villanueva argued in his essay "El morisco Ricote, o la hispania razón de estado" a key political aspect of *DQ* 2 is Cervantes's criticism of Felipe III's expulsion of the Moriscos in 1609-14. Sancho's implied corruption and his foolish laws are bad enough, but the true tragedy appears after his fall from power. The moral of the "lost" 100 *escudos* of *DQ* 1 surfaces twice, and doubled, as two sums of 200 *escudos* in *DQ* 2. We already noted the Duke's bribe, but Ricote's earlier offer of 200 *escudos* if Sancho were to help him recover his treasure is far more poignant. Ricote's description of his expulsion and his family's disintegration is

¹⁶ For a neo-scholastic's view of the nefarious effects of price fixing in 1605, we need look no further than Mariana: "si el príncipe tasase el precio de las mercancías, como muchas veces desea, en lugar de conseguir el remedio que intenta, agravará el mal, porque nadie querrá vender a aquel precio que se considera injusto y desigual cuando se le compara con la apreciación común" (348-49).

agonizing, and yet Sancho rejects him with blunt political language, saying he wouldn't help him even if he were to offer him 400 *escudos* in cash up front: “por parecerme haría traición a mi rey en dar favor a sus enemigos, no fuera contigo, si como me prometes docientos escudos me dieras aquí de contado cuatrocientos” (2.54.1074). *DQ*'s series of doubling sums of *escudos* is telling us something. Later, in *DQ* 2.58, right after Sancho again indicates the Duke's “gift” of 200 *escudos*, Don Quijote articulates a theological evaluation of a series of mounted saints. The bearers state their monetary value: “no hay ninguna que no esté en más de cincuenta ducados” (2.58.1095). That makes them worth more than 200 *ducados*, a sum roughly equivalent to either of the 200 *escudos* offered to Sancho by the Duke and Ricote. I submit this is Cervantes's way of asking us to weigh the governor's conscience. We do well to remember that, in contrast to Sancho's patriotic, ethnocentric reticence, Ricote offers the staggeringly liberal sum of 2,000 *escudos* for the ransom of Ana Félix's Christian lover Gregorio from captivity in Algiers. He also offers to pay the ransoms of any Christians captured in the venture and in the end he pays them all quite handsomely (2.54.1156, 2.55.1165). Can morality be measured monetarily? Like the bitter reflection on the rise of black African slavery in *DQ* 1, the darkest moments of *DQ* 2 lament the recent exile of so many wealthy, productive, and good individuals.

Still, the novel holds out hope for redemption in the negotiated relationship between its mad *hidalgo* and its crafty squire. We've seen how, especially in *DQ* 1, the knight's obsession with books of chivalry finds expression in the real world as his inability to manage his finances and his anti-economic stance towards others. But he overcomes this irrational naiveté and learns to pay for services and damages. This moral crystalizes again in the final passages of *DQ* 2. The Duke's footman Tosilos observes that Sancho's master “debe de ser un loco,” and the squire responds with a pun: “¿Cómo debe?... No debe nada a nadie, que todo lo paga, y más cuando la moneda es locura” (2.66.1172). Sancho's master is “crazy like an accountant”—i.e., he pays off his debts. We all know people congenitally immune to such sanity. Similarly, nearing death, Don Quijote obtains a clear conscience which the narrator figures in fiscal terms: “durmió a sueño suelto, sin que fianzas, ni deudas, ni dolor alguno se lo estorbase” (2.68.1182). Finally, dictating his will on his deathbed, the *hidalgo* orders that his squire be paid everything he owes him, in cash, and then some: “Iten, es mi voluntad que de ciertos dineros que Sancho Panza, a quien en mi locura hice mi escudero, tiene, que porque ha habido entre él y mí ciertas cuentas, y dares y tomares, quiero que no se le haga cargo dellos ni se le pida cuenta alguna, sino que si sobre alguno después de haberse pagado de lo que le debo, el restante sea suyo” (2.74.1219). He even pays his housekeeper, plus a bonus: “el salario que debo del tiempo que mi ama me ha servido, y más veinte ducados para un vestido” (2.74.1220). This is key. When Don Quijote first lost his mind, “olvidó... aun la administración de su hacienda” (1.1.17), but as life ends, both he and Sancho fulfill the final prophecy of Moreno's talking head: “Gobernarás en tu casa” (2.62.1141).

Let's end our look at commerce in *DQ* by tying it back to its pack animals. The novel exhibits both market mechanisms and criminal exploitation, but what even erudite readers like Márquez Villanueva, Johnson, and Quint fail to note is its links between salvific financial calculation and the vital transformational symbol of the picaresque genre. Cervantes interweaves his injunction that readers “follow the money” with another: “follow the asses.” In the classical and early modern picaresque asses symbolize commerce because they entail the necessary prerequisites of reformed empathy and reason *versus* orthodox cruelty and insanity. As per *The Golden Ass* and *Lazarillo de Tormes*, in order for trade to work its magic, individuals must understand others as fellow human beings with similar needs. Lucius and Lazarillo learn that forced labor is wrong; so do Sancho and Don Quijote. In picaresque fashion the trajectories of

their transmutations are marked by asses. Upon returning to their hometown, Sancho purchases “una jaula de grillos” from a “mochacho” for the sum of “cuatro cuartos” and places it in Don Quijote’s hands (2.73.1211). This refigures the final “enjaulamiento” of Don Quijote upon the return home in part one (1.46.536, *passim*). Not only does commerce now definitively win out over chivalric fantasy, it coincides with one last, and significantly asinine, mockery of Spain’s militant orthodoxy and its ultimate institution of expropriation. *DQ*’s final image of Sancho’s *rucio* targets the Inquisition: “Y es de saber que Sancho Panza había echado sobre el rucio y sobre el lío de las armas, para que sirviese de repostero, la túnica de bocacá pintada de llamas de fuego que le vistieron en el castillo del duque... acomodóle también la coraza en la cabeza que fue la más nueva transformación y adorno con que se vio jamás jumento en el mundo” (2.73.1211). Sancho then summarizes the novel’s moral: “Dineros traigo, que es lo que importa, ganados por mi industria y sin daño de nadie” (2.73.1212).

DQ’s trajectory morphs asinine forced labor into the modern bourgeois economy. The first innkeeper is also the novel’s first picaresque character, as per the moral of *Lazarillo de Tormes*, a man who in his past has been processed “por cuantas audiencias y tribunales hay casi en toda España” (1.3.55-56) and yet who now embraces the idea of work for pay. His economic lesson for Don Quijote contrasts with the latter’s endless conflicts with *arrieros*. Sancho’s punishing “manteadores” are another mixed species of bourgeois *pícaro*: “cuatro perales de Segovia, tres agujeros del Potro de Córdoba y dos vecinos de la Heria de Sevilla, gente alegre, bienintencionada, maleante y juguetona” (1.17.184). They remove Sancho from his ass and teach him the same lesson by taking his *alforjas* as payment. The connection between money and pack animals is explicit in the 100 *escudos* that Sancho finds near Cardenio’s dead mule (1.23.251-57). Next, recall Sancho’s self-identification –“yo soy un asno”– followed by Don Quijote’s formal *cédula* in which he agrees to pay Sancho three *pollinos* (1.25.286-87). In the next chapter, as his master slips back into an ethnocentric view of Dulcinea, the squire loses his promissory note and frets loudly about it (1.26.291-95). That is, in relation to asses, as our protagonists vacillate on the brink of comprehending that racism and forced labor are wrong, they also grope about for the proper way to make payments for services. Moral and economic conundrums knot further in the Sierra Morena. Will Sancho recognize the humanity of the people he would enslave? And, further up the chain of command, will Don Quijote recognize the humanity of Sancho and pay him a salary? Thus, just when Sancho the slaver’s flickering *rucio* is at its peak, Andrés appears and sarcastically questions the effects of Don Quijote’s “negocio” (1.31.365). Likewise, Zoraida’s ass in *DQ* 1.37 and the resurrection of Sancho’s in *DQ* 1.46 bracket off a mindboggling series of monetary transactions, from the endless exchanges that underwrite Viedma’s and Zoraida’s escape from Algiers in *DQ* 1.39-41 to the veritable clearing house that emerges from the accounts settled among Don Quijote, the innkeeper, two anonymous guests, Sancho, the second barber, the priest, and Fernando in *DQ* 1.44-46. Also, whereas so many of the novel’s mules and asses are rented –for example, the barber’s and the priest’s or Cardenio’s dead one (who pays for that by the way?)–, by contrast, once Viedma and Zoraida achieve their “milagrosa libertad,” the captain points out that her ass is fully bought and paid for: “compré este animal en que ella viene” (1.41.491-92).

Part two also interweaves money and asses. Sancho’s missing ass and the missing 100 *escudos* surface early and in close proximity (2.3-4.655-57). Another juxtaposition occurs when Sancho brags to his neighbor Tomé Cecial, “tengo un asno que vale dos veces más que el caballo de mi amo,” and then fantasizes about investing in “censos” and establishing steady “renta,” all followed by Cecial’s recourse to a refrain, “Cuidados ajenos matan al asno,” which ironically emphasizes minding one’s own business (2.13.728-30). We have seen how Ricote’s offer of 200

escudos to Sancho results in the former governor's fall into the cave with his *rucio* in *DQ* 2.54-55; and how those as well as the 200 *escudos* Sancho takes from the Duke are overshadowed by the value of the mounted saints George, James, Martin, and Paul in *DQ* 2.57-58 (cf. Molina). The general obsession with Sancho's subtle *alforjas* throughout the novel makes another tie between booty and mounts that is essentially Apuleian (1.preliminares.v.10, 1.3.57, 1.7.92, 1.18.196, *passim*).

There are three additional, very thick economic calculations in *DQ* 2, all related to asses. The first comes with Maese Pedro's puppet show in *DQ* 2.25-26. The episode's asinine aspect is inherent in the fact that Maese Pedro is the novel's most explicitly picaresque character, Ginés de Pasamonte, who competed with *Lazarillo de Tormes* in *DQ* 1.25 and who stole Sancho's ass according to the passages added to *DQ* 1.23 and 1.30 in the second edition of 1605 (apéndice.1233-35). The puppet show also takes over from the "Braying Tale" of *DQ* 2.25 and dovetails directly into the "Braying Adventure" of *DQ* 2.27. In Maese Pedro the *pícaro* has transformed himself into an entertainer *qua* entrepreneur. In addition to selling views of his show, he charges for prophecies whispered to him by his monkey: "Dos reales lleva cada pregunta" (2.25.841). After Don Quijote destroys Maese Pedro's theater, there follows a detailed negotiation over how much the knight owes for damages. The puppet master adds the value of each broken figure to the cost of recovering his monkey, which during the chaos headed off into the night, and then submits the total to the arbitration of Sancho and the innkeeper: "Desto manera fue poniendo precio a otras muchas destrozadas figuras, que después los moderaron los dos jueces árbitros, con satisfacción de las partes, que llegaron a cuarenta reales y tres cuartillos; y además desto, que luego lo desembolsó Sancho, pidió maese Pedro dos reales por el trabajo de tomar el mono" (2.26.854-55). Then, "todos cenaron en paz y en buena compañía, a costa de don Quijote, que era liberal en todo extremo," and again, "Sancho le pagó muy bien" (2.26.854-55). These payments echo the efforts of the priest and Fernando, who brought peace to the second inn in *DQ* 1.46, only now Don Quijote gets intimately involved. Given this leap forward in the metamorphosical trajectory of the picaresque, we might think of *DQ* 2.26's freed monkey as a sublimated ass, a Lucius figure halfway closer to being recognized as human.

The second thick economic calculation attends the salary discussion between *hidalgo* and squire in *DQ* 2.28. Only a few pages after Maese Pedro's calculated puppet show, we take yet another step toward reasoned commerce, for Don Quijote is finally prepared to pay Sancho a "salario conocido": "dineros tenéis míos, mirad cuánto ha que esta tercera vez salimos de nuestro pueblo y mirad lo que podéis y debéis ganar cada mes, y pagaos de vuestra mano" (2.28.864). We then get very useful information: Sancho says he makes two *ducados* per month, plus meals, as a laborer on the farm of Tomé Carrasco. He asks his new master for "dos reales más" and then, front money for the "ínsula" that has yet to materialize: "otros seis reales, que por todos serían treinta" (2.28.865). Now we have learned that Sancho normally makes twenty-two *reales* per month, or 264 *reales* per year. But the salary negotiations break down over the question of time. Sancho absurdly claims he has served Don Quijote for "más de veinte años, tres días más a menos," which would make for roughly 21,600 *reales* at the agreed rate; Don Quijote insists their adventures total a little less than three months, which would make for roughly 85 *reales* (2.28.865-66). Clearly master and servant are far from an agreement. In part, this tension explains the asinine turn at the end of their conversation. Don Quijote is outraged—"¡oh hombre que tiene más de bestia que de persona!... En fin, como tú has dicho otras veces, no es la miel, etcétera"—, but his final blast sounds transcendent and Apuleian: "Asno eres, y asno has de ser, y en asno has de parar cuando se te acabe el curso de la vida, que para mí tengo que antes llegará ella a su último término que tú caigas

y des en la cuenta de que eres bestia” (2.28.866). Sancho’s response is also suggestive: “yo confieso que para ser del todo asno no me falta más de la cola: si vuestra merced quiere ponérmela, yo la daré por bien puesta, y le serviré como jumento todos los días que me quedan de mi vida” (2.28.867). What is going on here? Cervantes figures the shift from slavery to feudal servitude to modern work for pay in picaresque style—i.e., as a necessary assent toward human consciousness and respect on the part of his protagonists *qua* employer and employee. Don Quijote still thinks Sancho an ass; Sancho still feels treated like one; but at least they are talking to each other about what this all means.

DQ’s final case of seriously economic math structures the novel’s denouement as the conclusion to the symbolic evolution of the drama of Sancho’s salary. If the picaresque ass turns picaresque monkey, it ultimately becomes bourgeois man. And if Sancho is the ass *vis-à-vis* his Micomicón slaves, then the metonymic harness that Maritornes uses to bind Don Quijote as well as Sancho’s ultimate willingness to serve as his master’s *jumento* implicate the *hidalgo* in this process. Don Quijote’s last question to Moreno’s talking head also cuts to the chase: “¿Serán ciertos los azotes de Sancho mi escudero?” (2.62.1140). When Sancho asks the head if he will get another island, the knight’s reaction —“bestia”— and the squire’s response —“quisiera yo que se declara más y que me dijera más”— hint that a truly bourgeois agreement remains to be found even as it forecloses the idea of another Micomicón (2.62.1141). Before Cervantes’s closing jab at the Inquisition via Sancho’s penitential ass, and prior to Don Quijote’s deathbed dictation of his final payouts in his will, we get the novel’s most extreme cluster of economic calculus. Don Quijote offers to pay Sancho for the 3,300 *azotes* required to disenchant Dulcinea. Their ensuing negotiation repairs the discord over Sancho’s salary. This time Don Quijote finds no reason not to pay. Symbolically, he even brings the Spanish Empire into play: “abrió Sancho los ojos y las orejas de un palmo y dio consentimiento en su corazón a azotarse de buena gana, y dijo a su amo:... — Dígame vuestra merced cuánto me dará por cada azote que me diere. —Sí yo te hubiera de pagar, Sancho —respondió don Quijote—, conforme lo que merece la grandeza y calidad deste remedio, el tesoro de Venecia, las minas del Potosí fueran poco para pagarte; toma tú el tanto a lo que llevas mío y pon el precio a cada azote” (2.71.1199).

The subsequent math lesson by Sancho is genius: “vengamos a los tres mil y trecientos, que a cuartillo cada uno, que no llevaré menos si todo el mundo me lo mandase, montan tres mil y trecientos cuartillos, que son los tres mil, mil y quinientos medios reales, que hacen setecientos y cincuenta reales; y los trecientos hacen ciento y cincuenta medios reales, que vienen a hacer setenta y cinco reales, que juntándose a los setecientos y cincuenta son por todos ochocientos y veinte y cinco reales” (2.71.1199-1200). Don Quijote even offers an incentive: “Y mira, Sancho, cuándo quieres comenzar la diciplina, que porque la abrevies te añado cien reales” (2.71.1200). Sancho wants to begin immediately, and so Don Quijote steps aside to keep count: “yo estaré desde aparte contando por este mi rosario los azotes que te dieres” (2.71.1201). Sancho then requests a raise —“le pareció ser pesada la burla y muy barato el precio della, y, deteniéndose un poco, dijo a su amo que se llamaba a engaño, porque merecía cada azote de aquellos ser pagado a medio real, no que a cuartillo”—, to which the *hidalgo* agrees: “yo doblo la parada del precio” (2.71.1201). Our *escudero* then tricks his master by directing his lashes against trees. Soon, however, his cries make Don Quijote so anxious that the latter asks to postpone their “business” using another enticingly asinine refrain: “dejó de dárselos en las espaldas y daba en los árboles, con unos suspiros de cuando en cuando, que parecía que con cada uno dellos se le arrancaba el alma. Tierna la de don Quijote... le dijo: —Por tu vida, amigo, que no quede en este punto este negocio... Más de mil azotes, si yo no he contado mal, te has dado: bastan por agora, que el asno, hablando a lo grosero, sufre la carga,

mas no la sobrecarga... esperaré que cobres fuerzas nuevas, para que se concluya este negocio a gusto de todos” (2.71.1201-02).

Ironies abound as the novel has come full circle. Sancho becomes Andrés and by whipping himself he assumes the ass-slave status he would have enforced on the citizens of Micomicón. The big difference, of course, is that he gets paid. Then again, from the employee’s perspective, is paying for raw, unproductive pain really progress? Or from the employer’s perspective, since Sancho fakes his lashes by whipping trees, can one really count on labor to produce without force? The final turn away from slavery preserves ambiguity, but Cervantes still indicates commerce as the way to wellbeing, even if it’s a matter of escaping poverty by taking “two steps forward, one step back.” Sancho suggests this by describing his fate using similar phrases with radically different meanings. Upon pricing his lashes he gloats, “entraré en mi casa rico y contento, aunque bien azotado” (2.71.1200). A few pages later he equivocates –“Abre los ojos, deseada patria, y mira que vuelve a ti Sancho Panza tu hijo, si no muy rico, muy bien azotado”– but then he concedes this is not the case: “Dineros llevo, porque si buenos azotes me daban, bien caballero me iba” (2.72.1209). Finally, he admits he is rich regardless: “Dineros traigo, que es lo que importa, ganados por mi industria y sin daño de nadie” (2.73.1212). So the truth depends on two factors: whether Don Quijote pays and what Sancho has gained on his own.

Let’s review Sancho’s outcome. Cervantes’s novel not only teaches us how to read it, it gives us the tools to do its math. In *DQ* 2.28 we learn Sancho normally makes 264 *reales* per year as a farmhand. The text added to *DQ* 1.23 in the second edition of 1605 gives us Sancho’s earnings via his *rucio* (apéndice.1234; cf. *Lazarillo de Tormes*’s sixth *tractado*). His ass makes him twenty-six *maravedís* per day, which, at twenty-six days per month times twelve months, comes to 8,112 *maravedís* per year, which, at thirty-four *maravedís* per *real*, comes to 238.5 *reales* per year. Adding this to his salary of 264 *reales* yields 502.5 *reales*. The 1605 addendum to *DQ* 1.23 also tells us Sancho’s ass covers half his expenses, meaning these are 477 *reales*. Normally earning 502.5 *reales* per year, but laying out 477 *reales*, Sancho barely gets by, saving just twenty-five and a half *reales* per year. Thanks to his adventures with Don Quijote, however, Sancho’s wealth increases substantially. In *DQ* 2.71, he prices his lashes at 825 *reales*, but his master doubles them and includes a bonus, making for 1,750 *reales*. Assuming the executors of Don Quijote’s estate make good, this represents just shy of three and a half times his normal income. But even if we assume Don Quijote’s executors don’t pay for these fraudulent lashes, we still must “follow the money” and assess what Sancho gains by his own “industria.” At the era’s rate of eleven *reales* per *escudo*, the 100 *escudos* he steals from Cardenio and the 200 given him by the Duke make for 3,300 *reales*, or over six and half times his normal income. I wager this explains Sancho’s 3,300 *azotes*. As for his salary, our heroes agree to twenty-four *reales* per month in *DQ* 2.28 (let’s be stingy and forget the island front money). According to Alfredo Bateman’s timeline, Sancho serves his master a total of 132 days, or 4.34 months, which makes for 104 *reales*. Adding these to his 300 *escudos*, Sancho’s total take is 3,404 *reales*—i.e., over six and three quarters times his normal income. If we add 1,750 *reales* for his lashings, then he earns 5,154 *reales*, or over ten and a quarter times his normal income. For perspective, at a combined 154 *pliegos*, at four *maravedís* per *pliego*, for a total of 18.12 *reales* each, with his “earnings,” Sancho could have bought 284 two-volume sets of *Don Quijote de la Mancha* in 1615. And we have not addressed the value of the three *pollinos* and the three *crías* that Don Quijote promises to Sancho in *DQ* 1.25 and 2.10. If the *pollinos* alone ever make him as much as his *rucio*, that’s another 715.5 *reales* per annum. Poor Sancho.

A few conclusions. First, while other genres are in play, in the end Cervantes's novel is a picaresque, one far more labyrinthical and critical than most readers imagine. As such, although it contains other symbols –lances, mills, felines, cages, etc.–, the ass is the big one. Likewise, its main themes are desire and slavery, as per *The Golden Ass*, and racism and orthodoxy, as per *Lazarillo de Tormes*. To appreciate *DQ*, readers must attend to metamorphosical asses, miscegenistic relationships, and mockeries of the Inquisition. At the same time, the picaresque requires us to gauge the effects of expropriation and commerce. For example, the novel's three "sublimated" Dulcineas lure us earthward. Amidst multiple mounts near El Toboso in *DQ* 2.10, Dulcinea discards ethnocentric orthodoxy. At the end of the Cave of Montesinos episode in *DQ* 2.23, she offers our hero collateral in exchange for a loan and turns his chivalric mind to venture capitalists like the Fuggars. Finally, via the prophecy in *DQ* 2.35, she specifies that only Sancho's freely chosen donkeywork can return her to her natural state.¹⁷

Another conclusion is that Cervantes's extreme references to asses in *DQ* 2 harass superficial critics as ignorant philistines blind to the classical and early modern protocols of the novel form. He points to Sancho's flickering ass in *DQ* 1 as foreshadowing Zoraida's. Sancho's strange *rucio* is part and parcel of a criticism of the problems of racism, expropriation, and orthodoxy in the Sierra Morena, itself a liminal place that serves as yet another miscegenistic metaphor. Sancho's ass vanishes at the onset of robbery, repression, and rebellion and resurfaces at the success of trans-ethnic love affairs; it disappears with his fantasy about becoming a rich slaver and reemerges upon the abolition of that scheme; it fades after his theft of 100 *escudos* and rematerializes once general agreement is reached to pay for damages and services at the inn. Finally, in *DQ* 2 Sancho becomes the ass that Don Quijote so desperately wants whipped, thereby atoning for the Inquisition, the African slave trade, and the expulsion of the Moriscos. His 3,300 *azotes* are penance for his unseemly 3,300 *reales* and yet, ironically, they also teach his adventurous partner to pay people instead of conquer them.

A far riskier conclusion, but one which I will defend, is that *DQ*'s textual enigmas are intentional. Editors like Rico who correct lapses and *errata* erase meaning; critics like Flores and Lathrop intuit a work of art. Lathrop grasps that Cervantes plays with his readers throughout *DQ* (1984, 2012); Flores disentangles the metonymic resurrection of Sancho's ass in *DQ* 1; both argue that in *DQ* 2 Cervantes is coy about additions to the 1605 edition. I do more, explaining why there should be specific inconsistencies at specific moments. All three of the "errors" in *DQ* 1 cited by Carrasco in *DQ* 2.3 involve essential aspects of the picaresque: a missing mount, stolen money, and an interpolated tale cut open by a clear reference to *The Golden Ass*. Rather than ignore these as gaffes, Cervantes asks us to investigate them. Rather than fix or cure *DQ*'s textual blemishes as if we were so many homeopathic editors attending to the scarified body of Don Belianís (1.1.38), we should think about their possible meaning. Thus, the invisible chapter heading of *DQ* 1.43 – which Rico supplies without comment– coincides perfectly with the first creeping appearance of Sancho's lost harness followed by an enchanting ballad sung by one last "mozo de mulas" about a certain "clara y luciente estrella" (1.42-43.499-501). Can readers "see" the logic that is on the threshold of appearing? Moreover, numerous other textual elements and symbolic objects experience the same meaningful intermittence as asses and money: the headings of *DQ* 1.35 and 36, Don Quijote's swords, branches, and lances, his different shields, Sancho's *alforjas*, Mambrino's helmet, even characters like Don Antonio –whom Rico silently corrects to "Fernando" and "Cardenio" (1.42.493)– are all gone and back again with no explanation. These are surgical instances of baroque picaresque allusiveness, not errors. Don Quijote's insistence that

¹⁷ For another vision of Dulcinea as a subversive figure, see Rabin.

Sancho mark his exit from the Sierra Morena with branches “a imitación del hilo del laberinto de Perseo” (1.25.289), for example, echoes Lucius’s description of a procession in honor of Isis, in which we spy “an ass with wings glued on his back ambling after an old man—so that you would have exclaimed that one was Pegasus and the other Bellerphon” (240). Both images get reworked again when Sancho sees Dulcinea as an “alcotán” riding like a “mexicano” atop a “cananea” (2.10.708).

Furthermore, regarding the debate over who authored the texts inserted in *DQ* 1.23 and 1.30 for the second edition of 1605, they sure sound like Cervantes. The first is economically oriented. The narrator tells us that Pasamonte “acordó de hurtar el asno a Sancho Panza, no curándose de Rocinate, por ser prenda tan mala para empeñada como para vendida,” and then Sancho describes his ass as “sustentador de la mitad de mi persona, porque con veinte seis maravedís que ganaba cada día mediaba yo mi despensa” (apéndice.1233-34). The second rehearses Sancho’s humanity towards his ass: “le besaba y acariciaba como si fuera persona” (apéndice.1235). If not Cervantes, then this was written by someone fully informed as to the protocols of the picaresque. It seems to me Cervantes might have even dislocated the first insert as another jab at simple readers as well as an extension of his game of “mind you my meaningfully intermittent ass.”

Why would Cervantes write this way? Two interrelated reasons, moral and artistic. Morally, Cervantes asks readers to detect social problems, crafting his novel such that the act of ferreting out its odd details leads them to encounter dilemmas about his characters. Attending to the ass and following the money, we discover good and bad things about early seventeenth-century Spaniards. Artistically, great books not only teach us how to read them, they teach us how to read still other great books. By definition, the early modern novel is the art of combining asinine metamorphoses with human psychology and political satire. Its problems are narcissism, cruelty, and racism at the personal level, and corruption, expulsion, and slavery at the social level. Moreover, at the end of the sixteenth century, Aristotelian mimesis is in vogue due to the decay of Christian metaphysics and the ascendance of bourgeois values (Auerbach; Rendall; Graf 2004). But this doesn’t mean Cervantes abandons the art of the novel. Rather, he pushes its limits and displays his knowledge of how it was meant to work. Narrative omissions and ruptures substitute for miracles and fantastical interventions. But the novel is still metamorphosical and philosophical in nature, which means that, although realistic, funny, and satirical, it also remains esoteric and Neoplatonic. Thus, Cervantes describes himself as “nuestro español Ovidio” and has Babiaca quip to Rocinante, “vuestra lengua de asno al amo ultraja... Metafísico estáis” (1.preliminares.34.vv.6, 10).¹⁸ This also means that *DQ*’s asses operate according to a broad textual tradition: Apuleius’s ass in *DQ* 1.35, Euclid’s ass in 1.32-33, the Bible’s ass in 1.37, Buridan’s ass in 2.51, etc. Then there’s Plato’s ass. Our heroes tumble as they enter Barcelona, recalling the ancient essence of political conflict as tyrannical democracy’s childish threat to the harmonious city-state in *The Republic*: “there come to be horses and asses who have gotten the habit of making their way quite freely and solemnly, bumping into whomever they happen to meet on the roads” (242; cf. Guevara).

¹⁸ At least one of Cervantes’s contemporaries, Josef de Valdivesio, author of the first “aprobación” of *DQ* 2, let us know that he recognized the esoteric, Apuleian tendencies of Cervantes’s project by alluding to the festival of laughter at Thessaly of which Lucius is the principal victim in *The Golden Ass*: “No tiene cosa contra nuestra santa fe católica ni buenas costumbres, antes muchas de honesta recreación y apacible divertimento, que los antiguos juzgaron convenientes a sus repúblicas, pues aun en la severa de los lacedemonios levantaron estatua a la risa, y los de Tesalia la dedicaron fiestas” (2.aprobación.610). For more on the Neoplatonic potential of *DQ*, see Jones and Melczer.

A final point on economic asses in *DQ*. Mario Vargas Llosa has called Cervantes a precursor to the classical liberals of the nineteenth century because he expressed his readers' thirst for a universal concept of justice now under assault by the new autocratic nation-state of the early seventeenth century (xix). I agree and go further afield, and in more tangible terms. Attention to the picaresque details of *DQ* reveals Cervantes's continuous investigation of the conflicts between the two mutually exclusive ways by which humans acquire wealth. In his book *The State* German sociologist Franz Oppenheimer labels these the "economic means" and the "political means." American economist Murray Rothbard points out that the first category is more efficient because "through the process of voluntary, mutual exchange, the productivity and hence, the living standards, of all participants in exchange may increase enormously" (13). This is "the path of 'property rights' and the 'free market' of gift or exchange of such rights," by which "men have learned how to avoid the 'jungle' methods of fighting over scarce resources so that A can only acquire them at the expense of B and, instead, to multiply those resources enormously in peaceful and harmonious production and exchange" (14). The second category "is the way of seizure of another's goods or services by the use of force and violence," in effect, "the method of one-sided confiscation, of theft of the property of others" (14). Honing a chain of ideas that links Aristotle to Mariana to Locke, Rothbard argues that "the coercive, exploitative means is contrary to natural law" because it "siphons production off to a parasitic and destructive individual or group; and this siphoning not only subtracts from the number producing, but also lowers the producer's incentive to produce beyond his own subsistence" (14-15). When we compare and contrast the beatings of Andrés, the lucrative balm of Fierebrás, the purchase of a manuscript in Toledo's Alcaná, the complex negotiations of Sancho's salary, the outright robbery of Mambrino's helmet, the subtle theft of Cardenio's *escudos*, the plan to enslave the people of Micomicón, the settlement of accounts at the second inn, Sanchica's cottage industry, Maese Pedro's puppet show, Viedma's and Gregorio's ransoms, the Duke's bribe, Roque's piracy, the production and sale of books in Barcelona, and Don Quijote's final offer to pay for Sancho's lashes, what we experience is the ebb and flow of the political and the economic means of acquiring wealth. On the one hand, *DQ* indicates the low opportunity costs of crime and coercion in a stagnant feudal economy, all in painful contrast to the mutual advantages offered by commerce in a bourgeois economy that has yet to be unleashed. On the other hand, *DQ* plots the metamorphosis of a world rooted in bondage and expropriation into one based on freedom and compensated work. When we think about how its readers come full circle from Haldudo flogging Andrés to Sancho flogging first himself and then trees, and when we think of all the machines that lie in between –windmills, fulling-mills, sailing vessels, water wheels, theatrical devices, and printing presses–, then Cervantes's fictional universe begins to read like Adam Smith's description of an early improvement made to steam engines in *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*:

In the first fire-engines a boy was constantly employed to open and shut alternately the communication between the boiler and the cylinder, according as the piston either ascended or descended. One of those boys, who loved to play with his companions, observed that, by tying a string from the handle of the valve which opened this communication to another part of the machine, the valve would open and shut without his assistance, and leave him at liberty to divert himself with his play-fellows. One of the greatest improvements that has been made upon this machine, since it was first invented, was in this manner the discovery of a boy who wanted to save his own labour. (1.11)

The moral, political, and economic inquiries of Cervantes's picaresque novel anticipate Smith's and Oppenheimer's insights. Technological advancement results from people's selfish desire to increase their own wellbeing by using machines to displace work away from their bodies and onto the material world. And a great leap forward occurs in human society once people realize that paying others for their work is not only more humane, but radically more productive, than compelling them by force.¹⁹

¹⁹ Norbert Elias and Steven Pinker have advanced modern versions of the classical liberal idea that commerce is a major factor in the "civilizing process" and thus conducive to peace instead of war. This line of thinking is at least as old as Apuleius and it was keenly grasped by the likes of Mendoza, Mariana, and Cervantes. For the relations between Mariana, Cervantes, and modern American libertarian thought, see Graf (2014b, c).

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